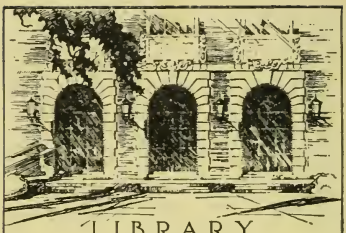
William · Monson.



LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY
OF ILLINOIS

x823
C873a
v.4

ANKERWICK CASTLE.

A NOVEL.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY

MRS. CROFFTS.

LET VIRTUE TRIUMPH.

VOL. IV.

LONDON:
PRINTED AT THE
Minerva-Press,
FOR WILLIAM LANE, LEADENHALL-STREET.
1800.

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2010 with funding from
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

http://www.archive.org/details/ankerwickcastlen02crof

1823
C873a
v 4

ANKERWICK CASTLE.

CHAP. I.

MR. SELWIN converſed with Lady Middleton ſome time, at different intervals of this melancholy night. At ſeven o'clock in the morning the ravings ceaſed, and another draught was adminiſtered. He was not ſenſible yet—he was ſilent as if exhauſted; they ſat for an hour, no light was admitted, he did not move.

Lady Middleton caſt her eyes on Dr. Hill; there was a faint expreſſion of horror gathering on her brow; ſhe opened a dark

lamp, and as she bent over the loved form, she resembled a statue leaning in hopeless sorrow over the dead. Dr. Hill advanced; he held the lamp, she placed her cheek to that of her dear Beaumont; his eyes were more than half closed, a deadly paleness spread itself over his loved countenance; she looked in anguish unspeakable on the Doctor, who felt his pulse.

"Compose yourself, dear Madam," said he.

She sunk senseless at the side of her Beaumont, convinced he was no more.

"She thinks him dead," said the Doctor; "I dread the effect it will have on her."

He opened a vein, but no blood would flow. The alarm that ran through the Castle was dreadful; the death of both Mr. Beaumont and Lady Middleton spread around, and universal terror reigned; it caught

caught poor Mademoiſelle M——, and thinking only of her loſt friends, ſhe fled from her bed, and wrapped in a looſe gown, made her way to the room of death.—Dr. Hill aſſured her he had hopes of Mr. Beaumont, and that Lady Middleton, he truſted, would be brought to herſelf immediately; he inſiſted on her returning, and Lord Sandford and Mr. Selwin forced her again to her room, where her own attendants put her to bed, and there ſhe ſunk in ſilent anguiſh.

Dr. Hill breathed another vein; a little blood flowed, and in about an hour Lady Middleton came to herſelf. When ſhe became perfectly ſenſible, ſhe looked to know the worſt; the Doctor told her Mr. Beaumont was in a ſweet ſleep, that he breathed eaſy—

"And on his waking," ſaid he, "I have no doubt now of his returning reaſon, and with care, his recovery."

Joy had an effect the moſt deſirable; ſhe burſt into tears, which, flowing copiouſly, ſhe received immediate relief from the ſad oppreſſion that weighed too heavy upon her. Every exertion was made to prevail upon her to retire; but with that mild dignity that awed and reconciled at the ſame time, ſhe requeſted to be ſuffered to remain.—She now watched the loved idol of her ſoul, and at ſix o'clock that evening he awoke; his eyes firſt opened on his Gertrude, he faintly ſmiled on her well-known face, and feebly reached out his hand to her.

Thoſe who have loved like Lady Middleton, can beſt know the feelings that now filled her ſoul; ſo many days of bitter affliction, ſuffering all the agonies of deſpair, to ſee him whom, but a few hours ſince, ſhe conſidered as no more—to ſee him ſmiling upon her with returning reaſon, and making progreſſive, though ſlow ſteps towards recovery; ſhe wept over the dear hand ſhe held

held—ſhe looked up to heaven, then at Beaumont, and then on Dr. Hill.

" He lives," ſaid ſhe, in a plaintive tone, " and knows his Gertrude."

He faintly ſmiled again, but did not ſpeak. The third draught was now given him, and he again ſlumbered for ſome hours. Lady Middleton was prevailed on, about eleven at night, to retire to bed. Mr. Beaumont took a little nouriſhment during the night, and again went to ſleep; about noon the next day he became perfectly ſenſible of every thing about him, and preſſed the hand of Lady Middleton with more ſtrength than ſhe expected.

" My beſt love," ſaid he, in a very feeble voice, " your attendance on your Beaumont will hurt you—you muſt take reſt."

Theſe were the firſt coherent words ſhe had heard him ſpeak for many, many days;

her tears flowed fast, but a thousand sweet emotions mingled with them. Beaumont recovered out of danger—once more in health, was a picture she now suffered herself to contemplate with rapture; she dwelt on it, and days of peaceful happiness in his loved society were once more opening to her delighted mind; all those who so kindly partook of her fatigue, she insisted on now taking rest, and she was left in the sick-chamber alone with Dr. Hill. Mr. Beaumont had again fallen asleep.

"Is all this sleep right?" she asked.

"Yes," he replied, "it is what I have wished for; and on his awaking from this, I expect to find him in a comparative state of convalescence."

"May I not ask, is it not caused by opium?"

Dr. Hill said it was not.

"I

" I did not deceive you, my Lady—I was clearly of opinion from the beginning we ſhould get him through it, though I foreſaw much was to be apprehended."

" I thought him too ill to recover," ſaid Lady Middleton, mournfully.

" Your mind," ſaid he, " was clouded by affliction, which dimmed your natural quick diſcernment, elſe you would have put more faith in the aſſurances of the old Doctor; though it would have broke my heart to have told you the ſad tidings, I would not have deceived you."

" You adminiſtered all the conſolation that religion and gentle ſympathy could give," returned Lady Middleton; " but I loſt hope, and was in a ſtate of almoſt deranged intellects myſelf.—Beaumont raving, dying, was the only image that preſented itſelf to my imagination.—Oh!" ſaid ſhe, burſting into tears, " you have a heart that will allow for my affliction;—but now I awake to hope, and comfort, and ſweet expectation—viſions of happineſs open to my

view—I will not think them deluſions;—my beloved will be again reſtored to me.—Oh Dr. Hill, how could I ſhut out hope for ever, and not feel almoſt annihilation!"

Mr. Selwin entered the chamber, and requeſted Lady Middleton to retire for the night. Dr. Hill joined in his entreaties.

"I ſhall never leave Mr. Beaumont," ſaid he, "until he quits this chamber for the drawing-room; and your being in health and ſpirits is an eſſential point to his recovery. Beſides," he continued, "I ſhould not be ſurpriſed if he ſleeps the beſt part of this night; the very great perſpiration I have been ſo fortunate as to bring on, enſures all my former hope, and his recovery will be more rapid than you expect; judge then how much it will be retarded ſhould your Ladyſhip be ill from this fatigue of mind and body."

This

This argument had its due weight, and ſhe went to her own apartment. For the firſt time ſince Mr. Beaumont's illneſs ſhe enjoyed a little reſt; but early morning found her again at his bed-ſide. He had not ſlept ſo much as was expected, and the profuſe perſpiration he had been in for many hours, rendered him very weak; but he was perfectly collected, and able to take a little nouriſhment, after which he converſed languidly for a few moments with Lady Middleton, and then ſunk into ſilence and frequent dozing; his looks had undergone a viſible change for the better, and this gave aſſurance to his faithful friends that their fears ought to give way to joy. A few days reſtored him to more ſtrength; he was able to talk, the diſorder was removed, and time only was wanting to complete the cure.

Oh! how delightful, how charming a thing it is to feel that exquiſite happineſs now enjoyed by Lady Middleton, after ſuffering ſo many days under the oppreſſion of

ſuch a load of miſery! The ſummit of human felicity now awaited her; ſhe would once more walk with her Beaumont through the paths of domeſtic enjoyment, they would again labour together for intellectual improvement, their united hearts would again be animated with the exerciſe of benevolence, and ſhe would ſtill learn wiſdom from his beloved tongue.

Her lovely infant ſon had been withheld from her embraces, fearful leſt infection might ſeize upon him; a few days more, and he was promiſed to her arms. The yearnings of a mother's heart were powerful—it was more than a fortnight ſince ſhe held him to her boſom; ſhe had the happineſs, however, of her young friend Mademoiſelle M——'s recovery, and the delightful ſociety of the enlightened Lady Sandford.

Mr. Beaumont and Lady Middleton looked back together on the paſt ſcenes ſo afflictingly the reverſe of what they had ever

ever experienced, and were piouſly thankful for the fulneſs of the happineſs they enjoyed. He regained his health and ſtrength very faſt; and whether it was the relief from wretchedneſs, or the powerful effects of the medicines adminiſtered by Dr. Hill, but Lady Middleton's diſorder was abating daily, and ſhe did not ſuffer from the fatigue ſhe had lately undergone. They now enjoyed the freſhneſs of the morning air together; they once more traverſed, arm in arm, the loved ſcenes of Ankerwick; nor were the mild evening ſkies or balmy airs more placid, more heavenly than their minds.

Domeſtic happineſs, thou only bliſs
Of Paradiſe that has ſurviv'd the fall!
Tho' few now taſte thee unimpair'd and pure—
Or, taſting, long enjoy thee; too infirm
Or too incautious, to preſerve thy ſweets
Unmix'd with drops of bitter, which neglect

Or temper ſheds into thy cryſtal cup—
Thou art the nurſe of Virtue!

Thus ſweetly ſings Mr. Cowper.

The war in India now engaged public attention, and our ſucceſs againſt Tippoo gave general ſatisfaction. Henry had been in ſome of the hotteſt actions, and diſtinguiſhed himſelf by the coolneſs, bravery, and judgment of his conduct; he was admired and regarded by Lord C———, reſpected and beloved by his brother officers, and his mild virtues and benevolent heart made him adored by the men. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that on his loſing his right-arm, and receiving a ball in the left-ſhoulder, that univerſal regret ſhould be felt. His arm was ſhattered to the elbow, and the wound in his ſhoulder had every appearance of being dangerous.

He

He had gained the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, and there were as great expectations formed of him as of any young man in the Britiſh army; all hearts ſadly mourned the wounds of this promiſing young ſoldier, but our ſucceſſes ſeemed to leave on the mind of Henry no regret for his own private misfortunes.—When he thought of Lady Middleton, Mr. Beaumont, and his adored Mademoiſelle M——, reflection became painful, and conſiderably retarded the recovery of his wounds.

The ſplinters were cut off cloſe to the joint; and while the operations were performing of both wounds, he preſerved the greateſt patience. When he was conſidered to be out of danger, he did not ſeem to receive that great degree of ſatisfaction that ſuch welcome tidings generally bring; for he could not bear the idea of being thus obliged, at his time of life, to give up his profeſſion, to return mutilated and disfigured —glory, promotion, all were at an end.

Mademoiſelle

Mademoiſelle M—— too—without one arm, and maimed in the other, how could he ſuppoſe, thus with broken fortune and broken limbs, that he could be acceptable! Such were the misfortunes his ſick bed taught him to regret, and ſad and melancholy were his reflections.

In the care and friendſhip of the amiable Loveſdale every ſoothing ſolace was given to him which his ſituation would admit of.

"I muſt leave you, my Lord," ſaid Henry, "I have now no longer any buſineſs in India;—I muſt leave you, and perhaps——"

"Conſider," interrupted the Marquis, "conſider, Henry, what awaits your return to England."

"Ah!" ſaid Henry, "can I expect, loſt as I am, that that awaits me I once looked for?"

"Doubt it not," rejoined the Marquis; "you would be as dear to that angelic maid

maid if both arms and one leg were left in India."

"Alas!" ſaid he, "I could never expect it."

It was at length thought adviſable that Mr. Henry ſhould be ſent home the firſt opportunity, leſt the heat of the climate might add farther injury to him. The parting between Henry and his friends was very moving—there was not one of his acquaintance but deeply lamented the loſs of his ſociety; but the various ſentiments that occupied the minds of the Marquis and Henry ſcarcely left room for the entrance of ſorrow, ſo that at the moment they were to ſeparate, perhaps for ever (a moment looked to by both with a degree of frenzy), there was not a word ſpoken; their looks ſhewed the workings of their ſouls—they graſped each other's hands, and parted in ſilence.

When

When the Marquis found that his fate had cut him off from every tie that bound his affections—when he thought of the long, long ſpace of time that it was probable muſt intervene before he could take to his arms any of thoſe dear relatives and friends his affectionate diſpoſition with their merit ſo highly endeared to him, not all the glories of his profeſſion, not the ſpirit-ſtirring drum, the clangor of the trumpet, or din of arms could lead his thoughts from his unfortunate ſituation. Life became a burden to him; he wiſhed to be ſent on the moſt dangerous enterpriſes; and when in battle, his deſperation, joined to his natural courage, made him perform exploits of valour that cannot reſt in oblivion for at leaſt a century to come.

The ſweet conſolation the ſociety of Henry never failed to bring him, was now no more; though all who knew him admired and reſpected him, every man could not be the intimate friend of Lord Loveſdale.

In

In Henry he found every thing congenial to his own character and diſpoſition; he had been long his companion—his ſorrows were ſacred to his friend; he had now no ſuch friend to pour out his ſoul to—to talk of paſt happineſs.—Thus did he bewail the loſs of Henry; and though his profeſſional calls left him but little time to himſelf, yet in every ſituation ever ſo arduous, he was but too tenderly alive to thoſe ſenſations and reflections; yet, ſtrange to ſay, his health was returned, the ſea voyage was of the greateſt uſe, and thoſe climates that in general deſtroy Europeans, reſtored him to health and ſtrength.

We muſt leave the unfortunate Marquis, and return to a ſcene now acting at Ankerwick Caſtle, that could he have known, would have proved a balm to his torn heart.

Lord Melville, after ſo long a ſtay abroad that Lady Matilda Summers gave up all idea

idea of ever ſeeing him again, returned, and remained, as report informed her, three months in Yorkſhire ere he made his return known. In the beginning of July her Ladyſhip received a letter from him expreſſive of his violent attachment to her; and that, as his conduct had been ſuch as he could not juſtify, he feared to ſee her, and that he had taken the reſolution of waiting on her friend Lady Middleton to explain to her the cauſe; for, until within the laſt three months, his ſituation was ſuch as to preclude a poſſibility of coming to an explanation. He then lamented a rule of conduct that muſt, he feared, deſtroy him in the opinion of Lady Matilda and all her family; that if the tale he had to unfold, did not find way to her heart, and if ſhe had ſhut him out from it for ever, he would join Lord Loveſdale in India, throw himſelf into his boſom, and convince him the unfortunate Melville, though he had erred, was ſtill worthy a place in his heart.

After

When he had written this letter, he threw himſelf into a chaiſe, and never took reſt until he reached Ankerwick Caſtle; and after travelling poſt all night, he arrived juſt as they were ſitting down to breakfaſt.

Every countenance was lit up with joy at his approach, and he was welcomed with all the friendly warmth he could have wiſhed; his real worth had endeared him to every member of the family: and though Mr. Beaumont and Lady Middleton condemned his conduct, yet they were perſuaded he had ſome reaſons that would reconcile it. His looks and ſpirits ſhewed them his ſufferings had been very great, and they felt for him without knowing the cauſe of his diſtreſs.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

AS ſoon as breakfaſt was over, Lord Melville begged to ſpeak to both Lady Middleton and Mr. Beaumont in private, and they inſtantly retired to the library.

"I am come," ſaid his Lordſhip, "to throw myſelf on your mercy—to explain the extraordinary conduct I have obſerved ſince the firſt day I had the honour of being known to you. You cannot be ignorant of my attachment to Lady Matilda Summers;—that I ſuffered ſo violent a love to ſeize my whole ſoul, almoſt at firſt ſight, may by philoſophers be conſidered as a weakneſs not to be vindicated; but to thoſe who have ever felt the

the involuntary paſſion of love, I ſhall not appear criminal: for in this I was involved before I was aware of it myſelf, and had communicated that love to the idol my young heart worſhipped ere I awoke from my dream of happineſs. Then firſt my ſituation and reprehenſible conduct ſtruck me to the ſoul;—I had, like a villain, given away a heart that was in honour conſigned to another, and robbed your friend of her affections and peace!—Oh Lady Middleton, Beaumont, though I have acknowledged myſelf a villain, do not too haſtily condemn me! Yet you will—I know you will.—Indeed," ſaid he, putting his hand to his head, "you muſt condemn me.—I ſhould have fled—I ſhould have torn myſelf from Ankerwick; a man of honour, of propriety, would not have heſitated a moment; and yet I loved, and was beloved, before the ſecret was fully known to myſelf: and though I ought not to have dared to engage Lady Matilda's love when I was attached to another, honour bound me to her.—Alas!" ſaid he, "how

I wander—how fallacious are my arguments! for by thoſe very arguments I criminate myſelf. I ſhall therefore give you the heads of my ſtory, and muſt in ſilence wait your deciſion.—The character of my late father was not unknown to you; his virtues made their way to every heart, and raiſed his character too much to need my panegyric. At ſixteen I returned from Oxford to Melville Park, to ſpend the Chriſtmas; to make my ſtay particularly agreeable to me, there was a continuation of galas and crowded parties. My father's houſe had been remarkable for all that old Engliſh hoſpitality which is ſo delightful to a young mind.

"Boyiſh in my manners as well as years, I made fierce love to a Miſs Walſingham, without knowing what love was; and, as ſhe was a reſident at Melville Park for ſix weeks, we were always together;—we rode, we danced, we laughed, and, like a boy and girl, loved. She was two years older than I, was pretty and elegant; and Oh!" ſaid he, riſing, and walking the room in great agitation,

agitation, "how amiable!—The following ſummer we again met at Melville Park, and ſtill I thought I loved. When I was preparing for my return to Oxford, my father called me into his library, and told me he was happy to ſee my growing fondneſs for Miſs Waſingham, that her amiable diſpoſition, ancient family, and immenſe fortune made her one of the moſt deſirable matches in the kingdom.—'And I would not,' continued he, 'mention my wiſhes of the choice I am anxious for you to make in a wife, until I firſt had obſerved your own ideas of her. When you were laſt at home, I perceived with delight a growing partiality for this lady; yet ſtill I would not ſpeak—you were young, and might change. On your return, I obſerved your behaviour on firſt meeting her; there was all that in your looks and manner on addreſſing her, that ſpoke your love was as ſtrong as ever; and your particular conduct ſince, I think, authorizes me to tell you my wiſhes; as, free of any ſhackle, you appear to me to have

ſelected her as your future wife, promiſe me then that you will never marry any other woman, if ſhe ſhould accept you.'—This promiſe then I gave my father, and I went to Oxford, deeply in love with my lovely friend.

" The following winter I again met her at Melville Park, and I own I looked with fear on the idea of her refuſing me.—With a beating heart I offered the worthleſs Melville to her—ſhe, with timid diffidence accepted of me; and, having finiſhed my ſcholaſtic purſuits, I was ſent to travel for two years; when on my return I was to be bleſſed, as I then thought, with the hand of my charming Miſs Walſingham.

" I was juſt nineteen when I left England, and in about eighteen months I was recalled by my father's illneſs. When I arrived, I had the misfortune to find he was no more. I loved this excellent man," continued Lord Melville, " with the moſt filial affection;—he was to me a friend and companion, as well as father; and ſo really deep was my affliction

affliction for his loſs, that I lived for ſeveral weeks totally ſecluded. On my recovery I enquired for Miſs Walſingham, and I learned that ſhe had gone to the South of France for the recovery of her health;—I felt ſorry, and yet not ſo much afflicted as I ſhould have been, had not time wrought a change in my young heart.

"I had but juſt thrown off my mourning, when a money dealing, which could be ſettled by nobody but myſelf, brought me to Williams's.—Your Ladyſhip's invitation to a grand gala, firſt made me acquainted with Lady Matilda Summers; you were the perſon who introduced me to your friend, and that friend firſt taught me what love really is.—Here I became the happieſt, and at the ſame time moſt miſerable of men. Lady Matilda too ſoon ſhewed me that until I ſaw her, I knew not the power of love —my heart only then became ſuſceptible of true paſſion, and before I was aware of my danger, I was plunged in a gulf from which I could never ſince get free—I was bound in a

ſpell, which each ſucceeding day, and week, and month made faſter—I was inſpired with a finer ſpirit; an indeſcribable complacency diffuſed itſelf over my mind;—I have not words to expreſs the ſublime emotions I felt. Given up to new feelings, my ſoul expanded, I was awakened to new ideas; the ſcenes of Ankerwick increaſed this pleaſing malady that, like a cloud, enwrapped me; I could, one by one, go over all the diverſity of amuſements that for months added to the feelings of my mind, and deſcribe the effect each had on my imagination.—I could wiſh for the language of Petrarch, to ſing forth the melancholy and heavenly magic which enchanted me, when the ſweet cadences of your voice flowed on my ſenſes, the happy Beaumont hanging on each note; your ſituation communicated the ſtrains that came only from the heart. I felt the power with full force; the delicious ſoothing melancholy that pure harmony inſpires was mine—a melancholy not to be reſigned for the gayeſt pleaſures. How oft when you and your charming

charming friend were accompanied by the harp and lute, in all the fine pathos of ſoft and mournful compoſition, the fine expreſſion of both your angelic faces ſeemed to plead for the tenderneſs you inſpired! Thoſe ſtrains that deſtroyed Melville flowed from no feigned ſenſibility; the happy coincidence alſo of circumſtances, the pure and elegant taſte with which every thing is conducted in this fairy land, refined and elevated all that was giddy and thoughtleſs in my character; every thought was chaſtened—virtue and benevolence here put on the garb that faſcinates; the ſoul was raiſed above itſelf, and all the ſweet emotions of love flowed in.

"From theſe deluſive dreams of bliſs, I was awakened at Waltham Caſtle by a letter from an intimate friend, which informed me that Miſs Walſingham was returned;—he was eloquent in his praiſes of my intended wife, as he termed her, and thought me the happieſt man in England, by a connection which put into my poſſeſſion one of the moſt amiable women in the world, and an

eſtate, which joined mine, of equal value with my own inheritance. This young man, who lived in the neighbourhood of the Priory (the name of Miſs Walſingham's magnificent reſidence), ſpoke in ſuch high panegyric of this truly amiable woman, that it ſtruck me he was her lover.—What joy it would have given me to find the place in her heart, which ſhe once honoured me with, now filled with his image.—This ſweet hope threw a gleam of comfort on my ſoul;—I quitted Waltham Caſtle without ſaying a word of my intention to you, Lady Middleton, or any of the family; and when I preſſed the hand of the amiable Mr. Henry, I threw myſelf into my carriage, without knowing exactly what my intentions were, or where I ſhould direct my way. The only idea that occupied my mind, from the moment that I received the letter, was that I ought no longer to remain an inhabitant of the ſame houſe with Lady Matilda Summers.

" The

" The carriage drove on, and ſo much was my mind immerſed in miſery, that when we came to the turn of the road, my groom rode up to the carriage window to know which way the boys ſhould take. I cocked my piſtol at him, and ordered them to drive on; for, in the heated frenzy of my imagination, I took my own ſervant for a highwayman, if a total oblivion of intellect can be termed frenzy. I ſuppoſe my ſervants thought me out of my ſenſes; and they believed, by my orders of going on, that London was the point I ſpoke to, and they carried me thither, more dead than alive.

" When I found myſelf in my own houſe, I then began to think why I was there;—the quiet of it rouſed me from the ſtate of inſenſibility that all the rattle of carriages, and the different inns I was obliged to enter, had not power to do; ſervants creeping about on thick carpets, that did not ſuffer a ſound of their feet to reach my ear; and doors opening on the moſt cautious move-

ments; a ſmall table with but one cover laid; all this ſtillneſs and ſolitude threw me into horror indeſcribable, deranged my brain; for I could not perſuade myſelf that ſome heavy misfortune was not approaching me. A full length of my dear father ſtruck my eyes as they wandered around the apartment —I could not get rid of the idea that the ſcene of his death was not at that moment acting over again in his chamber: I haſtily ſnatched a candle, and made my way to it— I opened the door with fear—I know not what came over me, but I ſunk ſenſeleſs on the bed. Here I remained a conſiderable time;—want of reſt and food, I believe, affected my head; I could eat nothing that night, and the next morning I found ſuch a languor and illneſs over me, that I remained in bed until noon.—I had juſt ariſen, and ſat down in an anti-chamber to drink a cup of coffee, when another letter from my friend was brought me, in which he mentioned that Miſs Walſingham had gone into Wiltſhire, to viſit an intimate friend, and

was

was not to return for two months. This letter proved the moſt healing to my tortured mind, and the beſt phyſician to my diſordered body; I called for more coffee and rolls, and after writing an anſwer to my friend's two letters, I ordered my carriage for eight o'clock the next morning, to take me back to Waltham Caſtle.

" A ſhort time brought me back to the loved ſociety from which I had fled in all the folly of uncertainty;—a thouſand falſe arguments, as I journied back to Waltham Caſtle, lulled thoſe reflections which ſhould have had weight ſufficient to make me ſteer a very different courſe; yet no monitor within had power to lead me into the right path.

" I accompanied you to town, and after ſome time, and with many ſtruggles, at length I left London and, like a coward culprit, I ſhewed myſelf at the Priory.—Miſs Walſingham received me with all that native innocence and joy that filled my ſoul with diſtreſs the moſt poignant; ſhe had a

ſelect party of friends, a few characters whoſe good ſenſe and agreeableneſs left no regret on the mind for a larger circle.

" The winter paſſed on cheerfully, for I remained near two months an inhabitant of the Priory, in all which time I made no advances to a point which ought to have been concluded long before. The conflicts I endured are not to be deſcribed;—I loved this truly deſerving woman with the pureſt fraternal affection—I could have taken her to my heart as a beloved ſiſter, and watched over her happineſs. I left her, however, and ſhut myſelf up in Melville Park, and reſigned myſelf to the moſt torturing miſery. The newſpapers gave an account of the Duke of Somerton's removal to Bath after his late dangerous illneſs; and, without knowing why, I inſtantly ſet off to London, and once more found myſelf in that circle out of which I could barely ſay I lived.

" I made a ſecond viſit, early in the following ſummer, to the Priory; my friend with whom I had correſponded, had been on the

the Continent for ſeveral months, ſo that I heard nothing of Miſs Walſingham. When I again appeared before her, Oh my friends! how much was I ſhocked to ſee her apparently in a bad ſtate of health;—wounded to the ſoul, and conſcious of my own unkindneſs to her, I fell at her feet.—'Ah!' ſaid I, 'why did you keep me in ignorance of your ſituation?'—I dared to look up in her face—a tranſient bluſh aroſe; her fine, though languid eyes were ſuffuſed with tears, and the hand I had taken gently preſſed mine."

Lord Melville aroſe, walked about the room, and at the recollection of this ſcene many tears rolled from his eyes.

"Compoſe yourſelf, my dear Lord," ſaid Mr. Beaumont; "your feelings haraſs you too much."

"Ah! Beaumont," he returned, "you would not have acted as I have done."

"Come, come," ſaid Lady Middleton, rallying her own ſpirits, for ſhe had been

much intereſted and affected by what ſhe had heard; "you condemn yourſelf too much."

"You will not think ſo, I fear," ſaid he, "when you hear the ſequel."

His Lordſhip then continued.

'Ariſe, my Lord,' ſaid Miſs Walſingham, the bluſh giving way to a deadly paleneſs; 'ariſe, my beloved brother,' ſaid ſhe, and again a deep bluſh overſpread her whole countenance; 'ſuffer me to call you by that loved name.'—As ſhe pronounced theſe words, a tremor of voice but too plainly ſhewed me the ſufferings of her ſoul—I ſhrunk from myſelf, and preſerved a painful ſilence.—Again recovered from her embarraſſment, ſhe told me I was very kind to take ſuch an intereſt in her health; that ſhe had been very ill, but that ſhe hoped a tour ſhe had in contemplation, would recover her. She then ſaid that though ſhe was very partial to England, and much attached to the

beloved place of her nativity, ſhe was alſo very fond of Italy and the South of France. —'I have wandered,' ſaid ſhe, 'over the plains of Languedoc; the Province of Dauphiny particularly delighted me—Piedmont and Lombardy were viſited by me when I was in a very poor ſtate of health. The paſtoral ſcenery of the green vallies of Piedmont firſt taught me the peculiar delights of the climate of Italy; I have paſſed many charming days among the flowers, and plants, and delicious fruits of theſe romantic ſcenes.—You know,' ſhe continued, 'I am a painter; judge then with what rapture I gaze on the imagery that, in that ſweet country, every where ſurrounds us.—Oh! how often have I regretted that I was not alſo a poet!'—She then led me to talk of ſubjects that I knew were pleaſing to her, and ſhe paſſed a conſiderable time in ſhewing me ſome exquiſite paintings of her own, and views that brought to my mind the charming country they were taken from.—Thus many days paſſed on; I thought her health

was mending fast, and I observed it to her: her countenance underwent a change on my making the observation, and she said she hoped her intended tour would restore her health.

'And when do you propose going upon this tour?' I asked in a hesitating manner.

'I have not yet determined,' said she; and immediately changed the conversation.

"Bewildered in a sea of doubt and perplexity, I knew not what to do; her evident illness affected me to weakness. I felt myself the primary cause; and the minute attention she paid to avoid any subject that could lead to our situation, plainly proved to me she no longer thought of me as her future husband.—I had frequently determined to lay open my whole mind to her—to disclose all my weaknesses, misfortunes, and difficulties; but a contrariety of sentiments forbade it.—Oh! that I had early acted with openness and candour both to her and Lady Matilda! I should have saved myself years of humiliating torture.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

"I HAD," ſaid Lord Melville, "been more than three weeks at the Priory, when one morning Miſs Walſingham aſked me to drive her out in a phaeton.—'The horſes are a little too ſpirited for me to manage,' ſaid ſhe; 'I therefore beg your aſſiſtance, as I know you are a capital charioteer.—I am not,' ſhe continued, 'a bad one myſelf; but when I laſt drove theſe horſes, I found they were too much for me, and tired me by the exertion they obliged me to uſe.'—When ſhe ordered theſe particular horſes and the carriage to be at the door in an hour, ſhe left the room; and the ſervant who received the orders remained, and told me he feared,

in

in the preſent ſtate of his dear Lady's health, ſhe would, from their great ſpirit, find them too much for her.—'But as ſhe ſeems anxious to ſee them again in harneſs, they being a new purchaſe, and remarkably beautiful, if you, my Lord,' continued this valuable old domeſtic, 'will drive them a couple of miles at a round pace before my Lady gets into the carriage, you will be the better able to judge of them.'—'Then,' ſaid I, 'let the phaeton be brought to the door in half an hour, and I ſhall do ſo with pleaſure.'—In croſſing the hall, I met Miſs Walſingham, and told her my intention; ſhe thanked me for my kind care, and as ſhe walked from me, I heard her deeply ſigh, and that ſigh pierced me to the ſoul.

"The horſes I found very ſpirited indeed; but after taking them a circuit of four miles without drawing bridle, they became gentle enough to admit, without fear, their lovely miſtreſs to be drawn by them. She directed our drive along the margin of a wood, under which ran a beautiful river, meandering through

through a rich vale of cultivation, decorated here and there with tufted clumps and lively verdure. The day was very hot, and I propoſed that we ſhould deſcend from the high land, and drive through a diſtant part of the park, where the green turf and high ſhading trees would prevent her feeling any inconvenience from the powerful rays of the ſun;—we were at ſome diſtance from the place I wiſhed to take her to, and I drove very faſt to haſten our arrival in a cool ſhade. The quick motion and great heat made me draw in, and the horſes being quiet, we were relieved by going very ſlow; the carriage wheels made no noiſe, and here was a ſituation that called for my ſpeaking on a ſubject which her ſilence ſeemed to ſay ſhe expected. Confuſed beyond meaſure, my thoughts were in a tumult, and my firſt idea was to quicken the horſes' pace, that, by their motion, the critical ſituation I had brought myſelf into ſhould be unnoticed;—ſhe perceived my confuſion, and putting her hand on mine, which reſted on my knee, and held

the

the reins—'Melville,' ſaid ſhe, 'I have ſought this purpoſely, and the quiet of this ſcene ſuits the converſation I have long wiſhed to have with you. I have more ſtrength than uſual to-day, therefore liſten to me with attention.—I wiſh,' ſaid ſhe, removing her hand from mine, 'to ſet you at liberty, and to bring peace to your mind; —from this moment forget all paſt ſcenes, and think no more of any tie of honour that bound you to me. Engagements, entered into at an early age, cannot, ought not, to be binding;—conſider me as your ſiſter—be my brother and my friend; for you can never be any thing more to me.'

'Do you wiſh the tie diſſolved?' ſaid I, faintly.

'I do,' ſhe replied with quickneſs, as if ſhe wiſhed the reply to be made; at the ſame time I thought I perceived an emotion that contradicted her words. I had the temerity to aſk if ſhe had formed any other attachment, that drove me from the place I once held in her boſom. She looked at me,

me, and ſaid, ſweetly ſmiling, no; that ſhe loved nobody better than me, but that ſhe did not wiſh to marry.

" The great agitation that crimſoned her cheek made me ſtart; the full force of my guilt ſtruck upon me, and in ſilent anguiſh I waited to again hear the ſound of her voice. When I ventured to look at her, I found ſhe was as pale as death; and ſhe begged me to go on as faſt as I could, for that the drive had been too long for her, and ſhe felt herſelf uncommonly tired.—I did ſo, and we reached the houſe without exchanging another word. As I helped her out of the phaeton, I preſſed her hand; and we did not again meet till dinner, when ſhe appeared cheerful, but it was eaſily ſeen not to come from her heart. After the cloth was removed, and the company chatting on various ſubjects, I obſerved ſhe ſuddenly became extremely pale;—Lady Emily Winbourn, who ſat next to me, ſaid—' Do you not think Miſs Walſingham looks extremely ill?"

'I do, indeed,' was my reply.

'Louiſa, my love,' ſaid Lady Emily, 'had you not better remove from the table? —Perhaps the air may recover you.' She aroſe, and with Miſs Walſingham left the room.

"For three days ſhe was not able to join the party then at the Priory; theſe were days of torturing ſuſpenſe, but the ſtate to which I was brought had at length ſuch an effect, that I determined to gain an interview, and lay open every ſecret of my heart to her. She was well enough in a few days to admit my viſit, and ſhe received me in her dreſſing-room. On my entrance ſhe perceived my confuſion, and endeavoured at a gaiety very foreign from her heart: I took her hand, and carried it to my lips; and looking at her with emotions that almoſt deprived me of exiſtence, I begged ſhe would hear me.

'I am come,' ſaid I, 'to explain——'

'Hold, Melville,' ſaid ſhe; 'I hoped that, ere you were obliged to make this explanation,

explanation, my illneſs would have ſaved you from a conflict that, if I could, I would relieve you from.—Hear me,' ſaid ſhe, 'and I ſhall explain:—My family, you know, have all fallen at an early age by the diſtemper that I now, and have for ſome time laboured under; by which unfortunate tendency I am the laſt of that family, and poſſeſſed of all their great eſtates. The late Lord Melville was the friend that early kindneſs made dear to me; he fondly hoped that by his kind care in my infancy I had conquered the diſeaſe I inherited;—on the firſt appearance of the ſymptoms he dreaded, he ſent me to the South of France, and I have every reaſon to know he was extremely afflicted. Yes, my dear brother, he ſhewed the moſt parental fondneſs for me; and all who knew his character muſt, as I do, clear him of every intereſted idea when he wiſhed me to become your wife;—indeed I am ſo vain as to be certain my fortune was not the principal inducement.—Deprived of all thoſe dear relatives that would

would have filled up the meaſure of my happineſs, at an age too young to know their worth, my heart turned to Lord Melville as its only ſupport, and I loved him as though he had been my father.—Suffer me then to conſider you as the beloved brother of my affections, as the ſon of that dear, loſt friend of my heart;—thus connected with you by fraternal love, let your ſiſter argue with you, and do not, dear Melville, do not interrupt me.—Your ſituation has been long known to me—you are ſtruggling between your honour, which you conceive binds you to me, and a pure and violent paſſion for Lady Matilda Summers, the boſom friend of that exalted character Lady Middleton.—I have learned her character, temper, and diſpoſition; and that knowledge convinces me ſhe is the perſon born to make you happy.—Oh my brother! then,' ſaid ſhe, putting her hand on mine, that lay on the table, and looking up in my face with a degree of enthuſiaſm, 'go, throw yourſelf at her feet—ſhe loves you; your conduct is breaking her

her heart—gain her forgiveneſs, and be happy!'

" Struck with conſternation and wonder, a tremor ſeized my whole frame, my heart ceaſed to beat, and falling back in my chair, I heaved a ſigh.

' Come,' ſaid Miſs Walſingham, ' you muſt not thus afflict your ſiſter—pray be compoſed, and liſten to my advice;—if I ſee you ſo unhappy, I ſhall regret that the name of Walſingham ever reached your ear.—Had your beloved father lived, he would have taken this taſk upon himſelf, for to make you happy was the ultimate aim of his life. Delicacy,' ſhe continued, ' prevented me from coming to this explanation before, and I ſhould have been too happy could I have explained all this matter to the ſatisfaction of Lady Matilda herſelf; but there are thoſe, Melville, poſſeſſed of ſuch refinement of ſentiment, and I believe Lady Matilda Summers to be one of thoſe, that I feared to diſſerve you in my attempt, and therefore I deſiſted; but believe the only thing

that

that can make me happy, is ſeeing you married to that amiable and beautiful woman. Tell her that you and I, when we were almoſt children, entered into an engagement that riper years taught us to repent—lead her to think of me as a ſiſter;—and, if I ſhould be allowed to return to my native ſcenes, you muſt promiſe to bring her to the Priory, and teach her to think as well of me as I am ſure my dear brother does.'

" Her manner," continued Lord Melville, " appeared to be unembarraſſed; poſſibly I could at that time be no judge, for I was in ſome degree convinced ſhe did not wiſh the connection: but I owned to her my love for Lady Matilda, and my fixed determination never to marry.—With all the feeling and affection of a dear ſiſter, ſhe rationally reaſoned the point with me.

' I cannot live, Melville,' ſaid ſhe, ' above a year or two;—has not Providence been very kind to me in ſo timely bringing on this complaint?—Had I been your wife, with perhaps other dear ties, think—Oh! think

think what muſt have been my ſufferings! But, unconnected as I am, I have learned to look upon this early diſſolution with calmneſs—nay, with pleaſure;—and could I ſee you happy with Lady Matilda, I would ſink into my quiet grave with every ſatisfaction.' —She then ſaid ſhe had talked a great deal, that ſhe felt herſelf exhauſted, and begged to be left alone.—'I hope to join you in the evening,' added ſhe.

"I aroſe, and left her; and paſſing from her room into the next, I threw myſelf on a ſofa, with ſuch reflections for my companions as almoſt deprived me of my reaſon.—I was at length rouſed by Lady Emily, who ſat down by me.

'Our dear friend, I fear,' ſaid ſhe, 'will not be well enough to join us to-night.'

"I got up, ſtruck my hand on my forehead, and quitted the room.—I walked out, I was unable to bear my feelings.—Oh Lady Middleton! the remembrance of this ſad day even now is too much for me.—That night Miſs Walſingham was taken ill; I never

I never ſaw her for a fortnight, and hardly left the door of her apartment ;—ſhe then became comparatively better, and again I ſaw her with all the reſt of the party who ſtill remained at the Priory. As we entered, I lingered behind, and when each congratulated her on her recovery, I advanced ;—ſhe held out her hand to me, and, with a clear and collected, though feeble voice, thanked me particularly for the kind intereſt I took in her ſafety.

' But I fear,' ſaid ſhe, ' you have thought ſo much of me, that you have neglected yourſelf. My beloved Emily promiſed to take care of you.'

" Affected by this ſpeech, delivered in the tendereſt accents, and by her appearance, which ſeemed more than human, the fatigue of my mind and body, all concurred to bring me to ſuch a pitch of weakneſs that I burſt into tears. I left the room as well as I could, but not before thoſe tears had the moſt fatal effects. Miſs Walſingham, overcome, like myſelf, with feelings too

too exquiſite to be borne, had fainted, and was no longer able to bear any perſon in the room. Phyſicians were inſtantly ſent for, and with hope, fear, uncertainty, and terror, I awaited their arrival traverſing my room. Two very able medical men lived near, and in a few hours, the longeſt I ever ſpent, I was informed they had been with Miſs Walſingham, and that they were going away. With ſenſations I know not how to deſcribe, I hurried to the parlour where they were;—they told me with much feeling, though at the ſame time with candour, ſhe could not live long, for ſhe had been a conſiderable time in a deep decline, and nothing could ſave her.—At theſe cruel words I ſunk into a chair;—ſo young, ſo good, ſo ſenſible, to be thus cut off! I would have given, with pleaſure, my own life to have ſaved her's.

'And is there then no hope?' I aſked, tears rolling down my face; 'cannot you adminiſter one ſweet word of comfort?—Muſt this angel be indeed torn from her friends thus in the prime of life?'

" Theſe good men endeavoured to reaſon with me; but I was not in a ſtate of mind to attend to it, and I left them. I placed myſelf at the door of Louiſa's chamber, and waited to ſee Lady Emily;—there was, methought, a pleaſure in being near this angel, and I flattered myſelf with the fond hope that the phyſicians might be wrong; it was indeed with the utmoſt horror I could bear the thought of their not being ſo. The next day ſhe ſent to me to come to her:—I found her dreſſed in white, and ſupported by pillows; there was that in her looks which ſeemed not of this world. She had always a remarkably fair ſkin, but it now appeared almoſt tranſparent; the deadly pale that had taken poſſeſſion of her divine countenance for ſome days paſt, had given place to a beautiful and delicate red; her eyes had that ſort of fire in them that ſhewed the ſtate of her habit; ſhe ſeemed reduced to a great degree of weakneſs;—alas! there was that in her whole appearance that ſpoke a quick tranſition from this world to a better.

' Ah

'Ah my friend,' said she, as I took her hand, 'how kind to attend me thus in my last illness!—I hear you never leave my door.' Her head sunk on my bosom, and I pressed her to my heart.

'Live,' said I, 'live for the unfortunate Melville, who would die this moment to preserve a life dearer, much dearer to him than his own.'

'What sounds are these?' said she, raising her head from my breast, and looking in my face.

"I repeated the sacrifice that I would make of my own life to save her's; she fainted in my arms. Lady Emily called for assistance, and I never left the room until it was time she should retire to bed. The next day she removed into her dressing-room, and sent for me at an early hour. Never did I see her look more beautiful. I threw myself at her feet, and resting my head on her lap.—'Live, my own Louisa,' said I, 'live for your Melville and happiness!'

RY
RSITY OF ILLINOIS

'Ah!' ſaid ſhe, ſhaking her head, 'a few, a very few days, and Louiſa will be no more!—Riſe, my dear Melville, riſe, and don't give way to this weakneſs.—I derive conſolation from many points in theſe my laſt moments, and could I ſee my beloved brother leſs afflicted, I ſhould be more at eaſe.'

"Juſt at this moment Lady Emily and Sir John and Lady Evelyn entered the room. When they had been ſeated a few minutes, Miſs Walſingham thanked them for their kind friendſhip; their ſociety, ſhe ſaid, had contributed infinitely to her pleaſure and happineſs, and ſhe conſidered herſelf bound to them by every tie of gratitude for their late unwearied attention. She opened a port-feuille, and taking out a ſmall parcel, ſhe locked it again, and giving the key to me—'My dear Lord,' ſaid ſhe, 'will you, previous to theſe my friends leaving the Priory, aſſemble them in this room, and read to them the paper you will find ſealed with wax, and directed? It contains ſome of my wiſhes that

that I know you will ſee fulfilled.—I put you in the place of your dear father.'

" I bowed, but could not ſpeak. The arrival of a Clergyman obliged us to withdraw;—I directed my melancholy ſteps to my room, where I ſhut myſelf up. Lady Emily, ſome hours after, tapped at my door.

' My dear Lord,' ſaid ſhe, ' come to our Louiſa's chamber.'

' It is then,' ſaid I, ' nearly over—this is, perhaps, the laſt time I ſhall ſee her!—Cruel, cruel Melville, but for you ſhe might ſtill have long been happy!'

" The viſible change in her appearance indicated too plainly that my fears were juſt. I ſat down by her; ſhe feebly reached me her hand—a deadly coldneſs had taken poſſeſſion of her; her head reclined on my boſom, ſhe looked in my face, and, ſmiling, ſaid—' Be happy, dear Melville, be happy; and remember, had I been allowed longer to remain an inhabitant of this world, your happineſs with Lady Matilda would have been

the ſource from which I ſhould have derived real pleaſure!'

" Oh Lady Middleton! theſe words, and a faint preſſure of her hand, were all I have ever heard or ſeen more of this angel;—ſhe expired, without a groan, in my arms!—I never left her until the earth received her, and in her grave I poured out half my ſoul. Pardon me," continued Lord Melville, " I affect you too much.

" The day after her interment, Sir John Evelyn put me in mind of the port-feuille; we aſſembled in the room ſhe had appointed, where every thing reminded me of its late dear inhabitant. Seeing me ſo affected, Sir John opened the ſealed paper, which proved to be her will;—he read it, and I found ſhe had left me heir to all her great eſtates and wealth; to Lady Emily ſhe left a remembrance of ten thouſand pounds; and a requeſt to me that the Priory ſhould be kept up, and that the poor ſhe had taken under her protection ſhould be my future care.

" When

" When I left the Priory, I fled to thoſe ſcenes of Languedoc and Piedmont that ſhe had ſought, and where ſhe would have been found again, had not Death cut her off, a bloſſom but juſt blown.—I became an inhabitant of a peaſant's cottage; I took with me her paintings, I traced thoſe ſcenes which ſhe had admired, and remained in retirement until time meliorated my feelings; I then travelled through Italy and France, and about three months ſince I returned."

Here Lord Melville ended his melancholy and intereſting relation. Mr. Beaumont and Lady Middleton exerted themſelves to the utmoſt, and uſed every argument to reconcile him to himſelf. They often talked together over the unhappy fate of a character highly eſtimable, and regretted much that ſuch refinement of ſenſibility, ſuch heroiſm, and ſuch delicacy of ſentiment had not been known to them.

Lady Middleton traced back in her own mind the conduct of Mr. Beaumont to her, who gave up his own peace on a point of honour to the Duke and Ducheſs of Somerton.

" Alas!" ſaid ſhe, " where is there ſuch a character as my Beaumont?—Poor Miſs Walſingham, had Melville been endowed with his ſtrength of mind, you might now have been a brilliant ornament to our ſociety, a flouriſhing example to the world of the practice of every virtue.—Your ſelf-approving mind diffuſed a ſerenity over your manners, and imparted the divine influence, ariſing from a conſciouſneſs of rectitude, to your laſt moments.—Love inſpired thy delicate mind with penſive tenderneſs, and elevated thy pure ſoul to that ſublime ſtate that raiſed you above this world.—Yes, divine Miſs Walſingham, the exquiſite refinement you poſſeſſed brought you peace at the awful moment of diſſolution; and your exalted ſenſe formed your conduct to the unhappy

unhappy Melville, ſo as to leave an impreſſion on all congenial minds, of a degree of united ſtrength of mind and worth that but too ſeldom occurs."

It appeared evident to both Mr. Beaumont and Lady Middleton, that the eſtrangement of Lord Melville had deſtroyed the too amiable Miſs Walſingham; and, leſt our readers ſhould be of the ſame opinion, it will be neceſſary to inform them that, added to a warm benevolence, ſtrong affections, and uncommon delicacy of mind, which muſt have been obvious from the preceding hiſtory of this charming woman, ſhe had a degree of ſuſceptibility too great to admit of laſting peace; ſhe was both warm and conſtant in her friendſhips;—Melville had engaged all her love, and at the period he was ſent abroad, we find her in poſſeſſion of real happineſs and a portion of good health that delighted the excellent heart of her friend, and almoſt father, the late Lord Melville. About ſeven months

after his leaving England, Miſs Walſingham received an anonymous letter, that minutely deſcribed a foreign lady, and all her connections, to whom her lover had attached himſelf; and as in general theſe kind of letters are productions of much care and art, the ingenuous and correct mind of this too amiable girl taught her to give implicit credit to every invidious report it contained. She was exactly the character to fall a prey to inward miſery; and from the moment this horrid letter, which was a fabrication of the writer's own brain, had reached her, ſhe never was the ſame in health or ſpirits.—She believed Melville to be falſe, and that ſingle idea daſhed her in a moment from the height of happineſs and content, that ſhe had ſo fully enjoyed, to a ſtate of miſery her heart was but too well formed to feel.—Lady Emily Winbourn was her friend; but the ſecret that conſumed her ſhe never revealed. Melville was inexpreſſibly dear to her; ſhe knew he would ever remain ſo, and

ſhe

ſhe could not bear to injure him in the opinion of even her own dear friend.

The anxiety of her mind ſoon was viſible, and ſhe went abroad merely to oblige her guardian; and in all thoſe pleaſing ſenſations that the indulgence of a deep paſſion cauſes, ſhe wandered in thoſe romantic countries, whoſe ſcenes feed the melancholy that is ſo delightful to true love.

On her return to England, the neighbourhood of Melville Park added to her diſtreſs, for ſhe mourned, in all the ſincerity of a filial affection, the death of her old and revered friend; ſhe therefore quitted the Priory, and went to the ſeat of Sir John Evelyn, with whom and his Lady ſhe had become acquainted at Nice.

Lord Melville never having been at the Priory, nor ever writing, or ſhewing the leaſt remembrance of her, fully proved, if ſhe had before any doubt, that his total

eſtrangement was certain; and ſhe daily gave way to her feelings. At length he arrived; and in the courſe of two months, though he had had frequent opportunities, he never told his love. This viſit ſtill increaſed her attachment; for though he was faulty in one point, ſhe ſaw many traits in his character and underſtanding that endeared him ſtill more to her. He left her, and ſhe now felt the loſs of his ſociety; ſhe felt alſo for his evident unhappineſs, and now only wiſhed, by a ſacrifice of her own, to procure his.

When the agitations of her mind were ſubſiding into ſome degree of calmneſs—when ſhe began to permit her own miſery to give place to the ſufferings of him who was ſo inexpreſſibly dear to her, ſhe received another letter, from the ſame anonymous correſpondent, fully informing her of Lord Melville's attachment to Lady Matilda Summers, his meeting her at Ankerwick Caſtle, the character of Lady Middleton, with which ſhe had been fully acquainted before;

before; a high panegyric on Lady Matilda, whose heart, until she saw Lord Melville, had been perfectly invulnerable, dead to the addresses of the most accomplished men in the kingdom; and the happiness of all the Somerton family on the joyful idea of her being at last disposed to make an establishment—all bore down the heavenly mind of the timid Louisa; and then it was her disorder began to gain rapidly upon her.

Her first idea was to leave England, and to write to Melville, giving her bad state of health as an excuse for her intentions of never marrying, that by so doing she might be no impediment to his happiness with her rival; but delicacy forbade this, as, in such a length of time as had elapsed since he was of age, he had never given her the slightest reason to suppose he thought any more of the promise that subsisted, and it appeared to her it would carry the idea of her reminding him of it. She therefore was silent, and determined on the rule of conduct she ever after pursued,

purſued, dictated by every principle that is admirable in the female character.

It may gratify the reader to be informed to whom thoſe anonymous letters are to be attributed, which will oblige us to go back to a period prior to Miſs Walſingham's attachment to Lord Melville; for, even at that early age, ſhe had had many propoſals from ſome ineſtimable characters, and others not quite ſo much ſo. In the number of the latter claſs we beg leave to place Mr. Temple. This gentleman had been deeply ſmitten with Miſs Walſingham's eſtates and ready money, and on ſo young a mind as her's he expected the beauty of his perſon would have made the moſt laſting impreſſion;—that it did not ſo, filled his ſoul with hatred for her, and the bittereſt diſappointment; and from the moment ſhe finally diſmiſſed him, he had determined on her never marrying, if the powers of his art could prevent her. He took, therefore, as by experience we find, effectual means for that purpoſe; and the unfor-

unfortunate deceaſe of that worthy man, her friend and guardian, the late Lord Melville, at ſo critical a period, completed his ſucceſs. Had his Lordſhip lived, his ſon would have been recalled to Melville Park, where his heart, which was then free, would have contemplated the beauty, elegance, and virtues of Louiſa; all his former love would have rekindled, and he would have done juſtice to his own principles and her merit. Had he fallen into her ſociety, that heart which wandered to Lady Matilda, would have remained ſo ely her's; but the youthful paſſion had died away for want of the preſence of the object, at a time when his reaſoning powers had not ſtrength to give ſtability to a flame, as yet only tranſient, and which had not made its way to the heart. And we muſt do juſtice to the character of Lord Melville, by giving it as our decided opinion, that his fate was unfortunate; for an unlucky concurrence of circumſtances led him into an error his principles revolted from, and cauſed a cataſtrophe he never ceaſed to lament.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

LORD MELVILLE, on this explanation, immediately left Ankerwick Caſtle; he could not meet Lady Matilda yet, but requeſted his friends would repreſent him to her according to their ideas of him. He ſaid that he would retire to Melville Park, where, if their accounts were not ſatisfactory, he ſhould not long after remain.

As Dr. Hill would not ſuffer Lady Middleton to quit Ankerwick, Mr. Beaumont wrote to the Duke of Somerton, mentioning the viſit of Lord Melville, the detail of misfortunes that cauſed a conduct to Lady Matilda which he was but too conſcious

ſcious of the impropriety of; that he had ſhut himſelf up at Melville Park, where he now waited the deciſion of Lady Matilda; and, as it was impoſſible for Lady Middleton and himſelf to meet them, requeſted their preſence at Ankerwick.

This letter did not reach the Duke at his own ſeat; he had been on a viſit which could not with propriety be ſhortened, ſo that it was near three weeks before they arrived.

Lady Middleton, whoſe perfect ſtate of convaleſcence made her look upon the voyage to Liſbon as a very diſagreeable circumſtance, reſolved to prevail, if poſſible, on Mr. Beaumont to lay it altogether aſide; for to pleaſe herſelf, ſhe never would have removed ten miles from Ankerwick Caſtle.

Lord Sandford and Mr. Beaumont had been one day at the Abbey of Devon, and her Ladyſhip had paſſed nearly all the morning

ing in her private library, and during the heat of the evening, ſhe again withdrew to a retirement ſhe had been always fond of; within the laſt month ſhe had viſited it oftener than ſhe had done ſince her marriage. Mr. Beaumont, who underſtood all the delicacies that belong to wedded life, never obtruded himſelf; and unleſs invited by her, which was ſometimes the caſe, he never entered any of thoſe private apartments.

About eight o'clock ſhe went into a balcony that ran along part of the weſt front of the Caſtle; ſhe took the book with her ſhe had been reading, and leaning over, in reflection enjoyed the calm delights of a mind at eaſe, contemplating the beauties of nature that lay open to her view. A ſtillneſs reigned; ſhe raiſed her eyes and heart to heaven—ſublime devotion filled her ſoul; ſhe liſtened with rapture to the ſweet diſtant ſounds that now and then reached her ear—the freſh breeze that trembled on the leaves; the

the deep ſhades of twilight that had now fallen, obſcured the diſtant objects, and admitted but imperfect images of thoſe that were more near.

Sunk in penſive tranquillity, ſhe remained until the riſing moon, which threw a ſhadowy light upon the lake that lay at the bottom, warned her it was time to retire. The ſound of carriage wheels ſtruck her ear, and with joy ſhe went to meet Mr. Beaumont;—ſhe ſat ſome time in the drawing-room with the family, and he not appearing, ſhe concluded it was ſome of the domeſtics that were returning to the Caſtle in an open chaiſe. She ſat down to the harp, and played ſome Italian muſic; Lady Sandford joined her, and with all the Italian expreſſion that charms the ſoul, they continued until Mr. Selwin entered the room. He addreſſed Lady Middleton, and told her there was a ſtranger arrived at the Caſtle, with whom he had been in converſation for an hour.

"And

" And the news he brings," continued Mr. Selwin, " will give pleaſure to your Ladyſhip and to every member of the family."

" If it portends you or Mrs. Selwin good," replied Lady Middleton, who had laid aſide her harp, " I can anſwer for it that it will."

" It does not concern me more nearly than it does your Ladyſhip," ſaid he; " but if we can make out the affair clearly, it will develope the myſtery that hangs over the birth of Mr. Henry, and give him very honourable parents."

" That is news indeed," ſaid Lady Middleton, with rapture; " who is this kind meſſenger that brings theſe glad tidings? —May they be depended upon?"

As ſhe was ſaying this, Mr. Beaumont and Lord Sandford arrived. When the former was made acquainted with the circumſtance, he looked to Mr. Selwin for an explanation, who ſaid a man, of the name of Reynhault, who had been a confectioner in

in St. James's Street, but had lately retired from buſineſs, arrived at the Caſtle about two hours before, and applied for an audience of him.

" I have known the man," continued Mr. Selwin, " many years, and have always conſidered him a ſenſible, good ſort of a perſon;—he ſaid his buſineſs was rather of an extraordinary nature; that he hoped it would not be thought either intereſted or improper, if he informed me of ſome circumſtances that came to his knowledge relative to a gentleman whom, he found, every one reſpected, and who was particularly dear to you, Sir, and Lady Middleton; but if his diſcoveries ſhould not be of real uſe in elucidating the buſineſs, he hoped it would be kept a ſecret that he had taken any ſteps in the affair. Conſidering this to be juſt," ſaid Mr Selwin, " I aſſented to it, and he proceeded as follows:—

' I married, ſome time ſince, in London, a woman from my own province, with whom

I had been acquainted many years; ſhe had lived in the family of the late General Marchmont, as governeſs to his daughter, to whom, after the death of the General and his Lady, ſhe became companion. This lady, as I ſuppoſe you have heard, privately married her couſin, Captain Frederic Marchmont, who was killed in Ireland, and whoſe ſuppoſed ſon, as heir at law to the late Lord Belmore, now enjoys that title and eſtates. About twenty-three years ago, my wife, to oblige her friend Mrs. Marchmont, went to Florence, to aſſiſt Lady Amelia, the daughter of the then Earl of Belmore, the near relation and boſom friend of Mrs. Marchmont, who had privately married a nobleman of great rank, whoſe family were as much averſe to the match as Lord and Lady Belmore themſelves were. Lady Amelia being with child, and near her time, entruſted Mrs. Marchmont with the ſecret, and entreated her to join her at Florence, that, by her aſſiſtance, ſhe might elude a diſcovery; but it not being in Mrs. Marchmont's

mont's power to leave England, ſhe ſent my wife, as I before mentioned, and my wife's ſiſter, who was an *accoucheuſe*; by whoſe united good management Lady Amelia was not diſcovered, but was privately delivered of a fine boy, who in due time was brought by them to England, and taken to Mrs. Marchmont, to whoſe maternal care Lady Amelia and her auguſt ſpouſe had conſigned him, remitting at the ſame time large ſums for his uſe. Mrs. Marchmont put the child under the care of the above *accoucheuſe*, Mrs. Norton, my wife's ſiſter, who reſided at ———, within ten miles of Ankerwick Caſtle; but ſhe unfortunately, ſome time after, having fractured her leg, Mrs. Marchmont directly ſet off to her, but did not take my wife with her. On her return to town ſhe gave an account of the death of Mrs. Norton; and told my wife ſhe had found a very worthy Clergyman, under whoſe care ſhe had put the child. About nine months after ſhe reported that the young Florentine had died of a fever, and read a very melancholy

choly account, which ſhe ſaid ſhe had received from the Clergyman.'

" I have aſked Reynhault," ſaid Mr. Selwin, " the name of the Clergyman, but his wife never heard it ; Mrs. Marchmont never told her either his name or place of abode.

' On putting all theſe circumſtances together,' continued Reynhault, ' I cannot perſuade myſelf but that Mr. Henry, whom my Lady Middleton adopted out of her own charity-ſchool, may in all probability be this very ſon of Lady Amelia Marchmont, the third daughter of the late Earl of Belmore ; and as we can prove the preſent Lord was not born for eleven months after Captain Frederic Marchmont embarked for Ireland, and that Mrs. Marchmont cohabited with Mr. Temple during all the time, within a fortnight after Captain Marchmont left London, and the birth of that ſon—and that Mrs. Marchmont had alſo another ſon by Mr. Temple, whom nobody knows what is become of ; I really am of opinion that this matter may be developed, if Mr. Beaumont and

and Lady Middleton will put the affair into proper hands. My wife will produce all the evidence in her power to diſplace the preſent uſurper, and bring to his poſſeſſions the lawful heir."

The character Mr. Selwin gave of Reynhault, the circumſtance of his being rich, and having no family to provide for, were ſtrong inducements for believing juſtice alone prompted him to take ſo active a part in an affair that promiſed ſome difficulty in the developing.

Mr. Beaumont feared that the death of Mrs. Norton, the total ignorance of the name of the Clergyman, in whoſe care the young Florentine was entruſted; the abſence of Lady Amelia and her huſband, whoſe name had been a ſecret to Madame Reynhault and only known to Mrs. Marchmont, who he ſuppoſed would not reveal it, would prove many and great difficulties; yet he hoped to overcome them all.

The age of Henry tallied exactly with the birth of Lady Amelia's child, and this gave the greateſt joy to all Henry's friends;—there were many conſultations on the moſt probable way of obtaining the information wanted; and it was the decided opinion of all, that Reynhault could conduct the affair better than any other perſon, from his knowledge of the characters of Mrs. Marchmont and Mr. Temple, if he would undertake it. He was therefore interrogated by Mr. Selwin, and a very conſiderable reward offered him. The reward he abſolutely refuſed.

"If," ſaid he, "Mr. Henry lives to return, and he proves to be the right heir to the Belmore eſtates, my reward may come from him; but no ſiniſter view, be aſſured, Mr. Selwin, has led me to make thoſe diſcoveries. I conſider my wife and myſelf as the only people who can bring this affair to light, and I eſteem it my bounden duty not to ſleep upon it; our deaths may deprive the real heir of his poſſeſſions, and the ſpurious offſpring

offspring of Mr. Temple, who is a character I think very ill of, may be ſuffered to enjoy the great wealth of one of the oldeſt and moſt reſpectable Houſes in this kingdom.—I have received a great deal of the late Earl's money, and I always was treated kindly by the family;—if it is in my power to do them, who are now no more, a ſervice, I ſhall conſider myſelf amply rewarded for my trouble if my endeavours be crowned with ſucceſs.—I would recommend, from my knowledge of Mrs. Marchmont's and Mr. Temple's characters and diſpoſitions, that Mr. Beaumont ſhould immediately go to Cheltenham, where all the party now are; my wife and myſelf ſhall be there alſo in private, and can contrive matters ſo, that when Mrs. Marchmont and Mr. Temple are together, Mr. Beaumont, my wife, and I ſhall be introduced unexpectedly. I hope by thus taking them unawares, and through the influence of Mr. Beaumont's appearance, from which Mr. Temple's coward ſoul will ſhrink, that, in the firſt moments of

ſurpriſe and confuſion, we ſhall be able to obtain full information, and an ample confeſſion of all we want to know; at leaſt we may make ſuch diſcoveries as may lead hereafter to a full proof."

When Mr. Selwin reported this arrangement of Monſieur Reynhault, Mr. Beaumont approved highly of it; and the following week was fixed on for meeting Monſieur and Madame Reynhault, at Glouceſter, on their way to Cheltenham.

By accident, Mademoiſelle M—— had heard nothing of what was paſſing at the Caſtle, and it was thought better to keep her in ignorance, as ſhe had latterly fallen into a ſtate of melancholy which ſhe herſelf could not account for;—nothing could perſuade her that ſome fatal accident had not happened to her Henry; all the wiſe remonſtrances of her friends were not ſufficient to baniſh this idea—it took poſſeſſion of her whole thoughts, and ſhe had no peace.

Her

Her underſtanding had been cultivated with the moſt ſcrupulous care; her taſte led her to works of genius, which Lady Middleton was happy to encourage, as every means of innocent amuſement contributes to ſecure the mind from vacancy; ſhe now enjoyed the advantages of theſe propenſities, for ſhe had taken ſo great an alarm, ſhe was incapable of ſtudy—ſhe could not collect her ideas ſufficiently to attend cloſely to any ſubject. She divided her time between muſic, painting, and different needle-works, by which purſuits ſhe often found her mind relieved. Her principal gratification was wandering over the retired ſcenes of Ankerwick, looking at the ſchool where Henry's name will never be forgotten, and admiring the works of Nature; all theſe afforded her a ſublime pleaſure.

On a ſtill evening ſhe indulged in her favourite walks, and her mind was often awakened into effort by the ſcenery around her; ſhe would then repeat from ſome

favourite author, poetry applicable to the ideas thoſe ſcenes produced, and ſometimes compoſe the ſweeteſt little ſtanzas, in which ſhe ſung the virtues of her Henry and rural ſports; every trifling circumſtance recollection brought to her mind of him, ſwelled into importance by frequent remembrance; and when ſhe enjoyed the refreſhing pleaſures of morning, when the lark, the gay herald of the early day, aroſe with aſpiring notes into the blue concave of the heavens, her ſoul would alſo ariſe, warmed by devotion, and ſwelling with gratitude to that Being who fills all ſpace.

Sometimes, when the gloom of night would bring ſuch melancholy pictures of the danger of war to her imagination, her fancy repreſenting Henry wounded, mangled by many ſcars, his limbs ſhattered, and groaning under his ſufferings and the preſſure of ſome unfortunate friend fallen likewiſe in battle—every vein about her heart would ſwell almoſt to burſting, and ſhe would

ſpeak

ſpeak the deſpair of her mind in ſuch affecting accents, as muſt melt the moſt hardened and inſenſible.

The effect all this had on her friends, is more eaſily conceived than deſcribed; and they looked to the developement of Henry's birth as a ſource from which ſhe would derive the greateſt joy.

Mr. Beaumont and Lord Sandford ſet off to Cheltenham, in high expectation of making all the diſcoveries they wiſhed.—Reynhault and his wife they found waiting their arrival at Glouceſter—every thing was propitious to their wiſh. Mrs. Marchmont had for a long time arrived at that ſort of unpleaſant rank in ſociety, that ſhe did not know how ſoon ſhe might be thrown from it, and nothing but the agreeableneſs of her parties now drew any body to her; for certainly ſhe had been indebted to the patronage of Lady Mary Wanflow that ſhe had of late been countenanced at all. Viſiters, therefore, to her houſe now became an eſſential object,

and any acceſſion of thoſe of high rank or faſhion, never failed to put her into the very beſt ſpirits.

Servants generally catch the manners, cuſtoms, and ideas of thoſe whom they ſerve, ſo that it is not to be wondered at, that when Lord Sandford and Mr. Beaumont announced their names, they were uſhered up by a footman, who, in the higheſt glee, opened the drawing-room door, and prancing in before the honourable viſiters, with a look of the utmoſt ſatisfaction at his Lady, placed chairs, which when he had done, he juſt perceived Reynhault and his wife, who entering immediately after Mr. Beaumont, followed cloſe at his heels, unperceived by the footman, who looked aſtoniſhed, and bowing to Reynhault, begged him to withdraw, for that his Lady was engaged with company; but Mr. Beaumont called to them to come in, and the footman diſappeared, much perplexed by a circumſtance in his opinion very extraordinary.

Oh!

Oh! for the pen of Shakeſpear, or pencil of Hogarth, to convey an adequate idea of the effects their preſence had on theſe two diabolical characters! Conſternation and diſtraction were depicted on their countenances. Mr. Temple recoiled with fear at the ſight of Mr. Beaumont; and as Reynhault entered the laſt, he quickly bolted the door to prevent interruption.

When the quick eye of Mrs. Marchmont, which was employed at their entrance on making her eſcape, perceived this, ſhe gave herſelf up for loſt; her preſence of mind forſook her, and ſhe ſunk down on a chair the perfect picture of deſpair. Theſe circumſtances convinced Mr. Beaumont and Lord Sandford that Reynhault's ſuppoſitions were well founded; and in a ſtern voice, the former told Mrs. Marchmont he came in the name of Lady Amelia Marchmont to demand her ſon, the lawful heir to the Belmore title and eſtates.

Pale, dejected, and confounded, ſhe was totally unable to articulate; and giving a deep groan, ſhe fell back in her chair.—Temple, willing to take advantage of the confuſion this occaſioned, was moving to the door, and had juſt gained the lock when Lord Sandford caught him by the collar.

"Hold, villain!" ſaid he; "you are not to get off thus."

Terrified at the manly ſtrength with which his Lordſhip held him, he made no effort to diſengage himſelf; and Reynhault being placed as guard at the door to prevent a ſecond attempt to eſcape, and his wife being ſo fortunate as to recover her dear friend, Mrs. Marchmont, from her fainting fit, Mr. Beaumont in a ſtern voice again demanded her anſwer to the queſtion he had before put to her. She faltered, heſitated, and ſaid ſhe did not know.—He then addreſſed Madame Reynhault, and deſired her to inform him, in the preſence of that lady and

and gentleman, pointing to Mrs. Marchmont and Mr. Temple, all ſhe knew of the affair, and of which, before a magiſtrate, ſhe would be ready to make oath.

Madame gave a very clear and accurate account; ſhe was a woman of very quick parts and keen ſenſe, and gave her evidence with much preciſion. Mr. Beaumont then aſked what became of the boy at the time Mrs. Norton died; and the name of the Clergyman in whoſe care ſhe had placed him, with the regular account of his death and place of burial.

Mrs. Marchmont was ſilent, nor could he prevail on her to anſwer. He then told her that as there was ſufficient proof that this child did exiſt many years after ſhe had reported him dead, and that the affair was very ſerious, he would recommend it to her and Mr. Temple to make a full confeſſion, when they would receive that mercy which their complicated crimes would be found

undeſerving of when they ſhould be given up to juſtice.

A deadly paleneſs ſpread itſelf over the faces of both; they looked at each other, and continued ſtill ſilent.

"The ſon of Lady Amelia has powerful friends," Mr. Beaumont proceeded, "who will ſupport him; he is a man of the nobleſt principles and greateſt humanity; you had better throw yourſelves on his mercy, than brave his power and that of his friends.—I ſhall give you a quarter of an hour to conſider of it; and when that time ſhall expire, if you do not think proper to take my advice, I ſhall adopt thoſe meaſures that may not prove ſo agreeable to you."

He then took out his watch, held it in his hand, and a total ſilence enſued. When the allotted time expired, he put up his watch, and taking his hat and cane, that lay on a chair by him, he aroſe.

"My

"My dear Lord," ſaid he, addreſſing Lord Sandford, "you will hold theſe people in cuſtody until I return."

He moved to the door, and juſt as he was opening it, Mrs. Marchmont called to him to ſtop, and ſhe would confeſs all.—She then threw herſelf on her knees, and, in all the frantic agony of real ſuffering, ſhe implored his mercy. This he promiſed, provided ſhe acted with candour; and, on her agreeing to do ſo, ſhe made a full confeſſion, acknowledged that the preſent Lord was not the ſon of Captain Marchmont, but Mr. Temple; and ſo fully explained her leaving Lady Amelia's ſon, at three o'clock in the morning, at the door of a cottage in the neighbourhood of Ankerwick Caſtle, with the view of his being carried to the late Lord Middleton's charitable receptacle for all that were helpleſs of every age, where ſhe was certain he would be taken care of, and provided for; and, as ſhe had no accomplice

plice or witneſs, ſhe thought it never could be diſcovered.

" But the ways of Providence are inſcrutable," ſaid ſhe; " and Oh! may I be forgiven for all my paſt errors!"

Mr. Beaumont had provided proper people to take down the confeſſion of Mrs. Marchmont;—they were called, and the information ſo much wiſhed for, they received properly authenticated, witneſſed, &c. &c.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

ELATED in the higheſt degree by this confirmation of all they deſired, they quitted the houſe of Mrs. Marchmont, and paſſed an extremely pleaſant day with Mr. Bentley and Lady Ann, who participated in the glad tidings of the fortunate diſcovery, ſo much for the benefit of a character ſo highly eſteemed as Henry.

"Pray," ſaid Mr. Bentley, "who is the foreign Nobleman that Lady Amelia married?—I never heard, nor have you mentioned."

"How could this circumſtance have eſcaped me!" ſaid Mr. Beaumont; and he

immediately returned to the houſe of Mrs. Marchmont to enquire.

The fright that lady had been thrown into, together with the corroſive retroſpection of a life filled with evil deeds, cauſed ſo much horror that ſhe became extremely ill; and the worthy Mr. Temple, when he ſaw thoſe he ſo much dreaded had quitted the houſe, turned like a fury on Mrs. Marchmont, regardleſs of the ſad ſtate to which ſhe was reduced.

"Now, Madam," ſaid he, "the time is arrived I long ago foretold would come; and you have the comfortable ſatisfaction of congratulating yourſelf on the amiable ſweetneſs of your temper.—How," ſaid he, "could I have expected better, from an attachment to a vile devil who would have adminiſtered a doſe of poiſon to the huſband of her affections, to make room for the enjoyment of an illicit amour!—Vile devil!—Wretch!" continued he, "go and account for

for all the ſums which you have ſquandered out of the Belmore eſtate, on your paramour Roſs.—Go," ſaid he, again daſhing her againſt the wall, "go and ſtarve with that d——d baſtard you made a Lord of."

He ſhut the door with violence, haſtened to his lodgings, paid off all his bills, got into his carriage, and travelled all night; nor did he ſtop to take any refreſhment until he arrived at his own houſe in London: he then went to bed, and ordered to be called in two hours. The moment he was riſen and dreſſed, he went to his banker's, and in two days, with all his wealth, embarked for Havre; determined never more to behold Mrs. Marchmont, his ſon the Earl of Belmore, or any branch of the Middleton family, if he could poſſibly avoid it.

The guilty and wretched Mrs. Marchmont had received a very violent contuſion on her head, by its coming, with all the force Temple was maſter of, againſt a ſharp angle

angle of a wainſcot pannel; and ſhe was carried by her ſervants to bed, a ſurgeon ſent for, and juſt as her head had been dreſſed, and ſhe was again ſettled, Mr. Beaumont arrived; ſhe was therefore obliged to have him told that ſhe was too ill to go down ſtairs, but that, if his buſineſs would not admit of delay, ſhe would ſee him in her bed room. He accordingly followed the meſſenger, and on making the enquiry, Mrs. Marchmont immediately informed him that Lady Amelia Marchmont had married the only ſon of Prince De Valazee, one of the greateſt families in Florence, and immenſely rich.

"Prince De Valazee, of Florence," re-echoed Mr. Beaumont; "are you ſure what you tell me is true?"

"I am certain of it," replied Mrs. Marchmont.—"I will give you the letter I received from Lady Amelia; and Oh!" ſaid ſhe, deeply ſighing, "the confidence you will find ſhe placed in me, I have ill rewarded;

rewarded;—I alone have been poſſeſſed of the ſecret of their retreat, which that letter will inform you of."

Mr. Beaumont withdrew with the letter, and quitted a woman whom he could not look on without feeling a ſentiment of horror. He ſaw her heart was blackened by every vice that deforms human nature; and, though miſtreſs of the deepeſt diſſimulation, all her arts failed her at the hour of trial.

Ah! how hideous is vice! Gradually was this vile woman going on from early infancy from bad to worſe; unbounded in her paſſions, ſhe took the reins, and drove from one ſcene of iniquity to another, until her career was ſtopped by her atrocious crimes coming, in all the dark colouring of wickedneſs, to light.

When Mr. Beaumont read Lady Amelia's letter to this fiend, he was aſtoniſhed there could ſuch a character as Mrs. Marchmont exiſt;

exiſt; every line ſpoke the maternal heart torn by affliction at the loſs of its tender offspring, and, in the warmeſt accents, pouring out her gratitude for her care and affection to her ſuffering angel ſon. She repreſented the anguiſh of her adored De —— in all the ſoft colouring of refined miſery; and ſuch was the power of her eloquence, that the repreſentation of their feelings brought tears into the eyes of the amiable Beaumont. What language can paint the delight he felt that Henry, the worthy, the excellent Henry, ſhould prove the ſon of Selicia De ——'s brother!

Reader, look back, and thou wilt find that intereſting hiſtory.—Yes, De ——, if you and Lady Amelia live—if Heaven ſhall ſpare your noble ſon from the dangers of war, you will find him all you wiſh—poſſeſſed of every manly grace and mental endowment.—Yes, yes, you are bleſſed with a ſon, who will juſtify the moſt ſanguine hopes of the fondeſt parent.

On

On their return to Ankerwick Caſtle, Mademoiſelle M—— was made acquainted with all that hiſtory the reader has been already informed of. Deſcriptive repetitions may, to an author, ſerve two purpoſes: that of increaſing the ſize of his work, and gratifying his own vanity; but as we do not conceive it would tend to elucidate our ſubject, we have taken the liberty to abridge, as much as poſſible, conſiſtent with the ſtory. We could certainly, if we pleaſed, fill a dozen pages with the amiable and accompliſhed Mademoiſelle M——'s different emotions on the knowledge of this happy developement; but we conſider it ſufficient to ſay, that the delight it brought was pure —ſhe felt the full joy it would bring to the heart of Henry; and her lovely eyes filled with tears when ſhe thought how long, how very long it might be ere he could learn theſe happy tidings; it therefore, on this principle, added to the terrors ſhe felt for his danger and abſence.

Lady

Lady Middleton received the information of Henry's conſanguinity to the beloved wife of her dear lamented father with the greateſt tranſport; and ſhe mentioned to Mr. Beaumont that ſhe had always felt for Henry that kind of affection ſhe never could account for; he was drawn to her by a kind of tie ſhe would have been miſerable to think ſhould ever be broken.

"I feel," ſaid ſhe, "every praiſe beſtowed on him, as I ſhould have felt had he been my own ſon. From the moment I ſaw him exerciſing his wooden gun at the ſchool houſe door, I felt an affection for him, which his many perfections have increaſed; and what ſublime happineſs do I now feel, from having afforded him thoſe advantages, without which, a character great in every point muſt have been obſcured in the ſhade. The abundant care the worthy Mr. Selwin took of his education, has brought out all his innate perfections; they

ſhine

ſhine now in full ſplendour, and form a character equal to his noble father."

Mr. Beaumont and his Gertrude viſited the ſecret apartments, and in the contemplation of the beauties and virtues of Selicia De Valazee, they paſſed one of theſe mornings known only to thoſe poſſeſſed of the refinement of theſe worthy and noble perſonages, who, enjoying wealth and power, lived in a progreſſive continuation of benevolence, wiping away the tear of woe, and adminiſtering to the unhappy conſolation and aſſiſtance.

When Dr. Hill gave the joyful opinion that the perfect recovery of Lady Middleton made a voyage to Liſbon unneceſſary, the voice of gladneſs re-echoed all around the Caſtle—not a face that did not wear the animated delight they felt at their hearts; even Mademoiſelle M—— forgot her own ſorrow in the happineſs of thinking there was

was not even the remoteſt doubt of Lady Middleton's reſtoration to health.

The arrival of the Somerton family, with the doubtful ſtate they all appeared to be in, and the languor of illneſs that too evidently ſhewed itſelf on the countenance of Lady Matilda, changed for a ſhort time the fluſh of joy that reigned at the Caſtle. Mr. Beaumont, therefore, haſtened to inform them of the hiſtory of Lord Melville's misfortunes, with the hope of clearing away the heavy clouds that had for ſo long a time hung over that Houſe; and though they conſidered Lord Melville as faulty, yet they attributed theſe faults more to youth, rather than to his heart or principles. The Duke condemned all early engagements as a never-failing ſource of miſery; and had the late Lord Melville, a man whom all the world allowed to poſſeſs the moſt refined ſenſe and underſtanding, brought his ſon and Miſs Walſingham together at a later period of life,

life, it is more than probable his wiſhes had been ſecured.

Lady Matilda wept and grieved over the ſad misfortunes of Miſs Walſingham; every heart acknowledged the noble delicacy ſhe had ſhewn in every action. They talked over the perfections of this ſublime departed ſpirit, and blamed and praiſed Melville by turns, in whoſe favour Mr. Beaumont exerted every argument;—and the power of his eloquence, joined to a great prepoſſeſſion, worked ſo ſtrongly for him, that Mr. Beaumont very ſhortly wrote ſuch a letter as was balm to a heart long haraſſed by the moſt afflicting feelings; and a few days brought his Lordſhip to the feet of Lady Matilda, after an abſence of nearly two years.

Mr. Beaumont had ſent to Florence, to make inſtant enquiry for the Prince De Valazee, with a full detail of all the circumſtances concerning his ſon; and an anſwer was now every day expected with the

utmoſt impatience. There were letters ſent alſo to India, to give the joyful and neceſſary information to Henry; but Henry was advancing by ſlow degrees to Europe, and while theſe letters were on their way, he arrived at the Cape of Good Hope.

The hot regions of India did not agree ſo well with him as with the Marquis; his health was rather impaired, and he grew daily worſe on the paſſage: and when he arrived at the Cape, he felt himſelf extremely ill, and the dread of not being able to ſail when the fleet put again to ſea, retarded his recovery. However, beyond his expectation, or that of his faithful ſervant, after ſome weeks he ſhewed ſigns of returning health, and in much better ſpirits thán he had enjoyed ſince his parting with Lord Loveſdale, he again put to ſea.

We now beg leave to return to Cheltenham, where we find Mrs. Marchmont, after ſome days, in all the agonies of a raging fever, the

the wound in her head excruciating, and every appearance of a ſpeedy diſſolution.—When Lady Mary Wanſlow was made acquainted with the circumſtances of her unfortunate ſituation, ſhe ſhuddered.

" Vile woman!" exclaimed ſhe, on ſeeing Roſs, " what a viper have I ſo long taken to my boſom, to impoſe thus upon me!—What a cheat!—what an impoſtor!—What horrid ſcenes of iniquity were practiſed on the world by that deteſtable woman, and her vile aſſociate, Temple;—but he is gone off. What a puſillanimous villain!" Concluding Roſs was already acquainted with the cauſe of all this abuſe, who had but juſt returned from an excurſion of ſome days into the country, ſhe ran on in the moſt violent invective againſt a woman, who, but juſt now, had been her moſt beloved friend, and her accomplice in many acts which would not bear the light.

" Who—what?" ſaid Roſs, " I do not know who you are ſpeaking of.—Mr. Temple

gone off—puſillanimous villain—dear Lady Mary, explain; I am in total ignorance of your meaning, or what it can poſſibly lead to."

"Why," ſaid ſhe, "have you not heard what all the world knows, that Mrs. Marchmont deſerves to be hanged—nay, burnt alive, for ſuch complicated ſcenes of wickedneſs as are almoſt incomprehenſible."

Roſs turned pale.—"Good God!" ſaid he.

"Yes, yes," ſaid Lady Mary, "you may well ſtare—ſhe murdered the ſon of Captain Marchmont, her huſband, to make way for her illegitimate ſon by the magnanimous Temple, to the title and eſtate of Belmore. Lady Amelia Marchmont too, her couſin, who privately married a foreign Nobleman, ſent a ſon of that marriage to England, to her care, along with large ſums of money for his education and maintenance; all which ſums ſhe moſt providently converted

to

to her own uſe, put the poor child into Lady Middleton's charity-ſchool at Ankerwick Caſtle, and informed Lady Amelia he was dead; but, by the greateſt accident, Lady Middleton adopted him, and Henry, the charity-boy, turns out to be heir to the Belmore title and eſtates, to the great diſcomfiture of the preſent noble Earl, who becomes a beggar, and of courſe no longer the darling of his wicked mother. All this," continued Lady Mary, "I had from Lady Priſcilla M——, who came to ſee me juſt as I was going to Mrs. Marchmont's, to take her out in the coach; ſo that every word, you may depend upon it, is literally true."

"Did you not hear it from Mrs. Marchmont herſelf?" aſked Roſs, who was in a violent tremor and agitation from the dreadful tale juſt recited.

"I hear it from Mrs. Marchmont!" re-echoed Lady Mary, getting up from her chair, and walking about the room like a fury; "I hear it from herſelf!—Pray, Sir," ſaid ſhe, her lips quivering, her eyes flaſhing

fire, and her whole frame diſtorted with paſſion, "who do you take me for, to ſuppoſe I could aſſociate with ſuch a creature—a vile, horrid, abominable, wicked wretch!—No, no, Lady Mary Wanflow keeps no ſuch company; and if you, Roſs, once viſit her, never expect to be ſeen within my doors again."

Roſs now did all he could to moderate her paſſion, and ſubmiſſively begged ſhe would tell him all ſhe knew of Mr. Temple.

"Temple," ſaid Lady Mary, "why all I know of him is, that he is gone off, by the way of Havre, to France, as we learn from a letter Sir William received from him; to be out of the way, I ſuppoſe, when the iſſues and profits of the Belmore eſtate are to be accounted for."

"And has he left the wretched Mrs. Marchmont to brave the ſtorm alone?" ſaid Roſs, a deep colour mounting to his eyes.

"No,"

"No," said Lady Mary, sneeringly, "he has left you to sooth and take care of her." As she said this, she darted a look of contempt at him, and quitted the room.

The mind of Ross now became in a very perturbed state; he was gay, extravagant, and a libertine; but he was brave and generous, and his soul recoiled at the dastardly spirit of Temple. He resolved to brave Lady Mary's rage and disaffection, rather than deprive himself of the happiness of affording the miserable, forsaken Mrs. Marchmont all the comfort in his power; he therefore took his hat, and rapped at Mrs. Marchmont's door; when he asked the footman for his lady.

"Alas! Sir," said the man, "my lady is ill a-bed, and I am sure she cannot see you;—she has received a shocking wound in her head."

"Wound in her head," repeated Ross, "how did she get a wound in her head?"

"Huſh!" ſaid the man; "if you will pleaſe to ſtep into the parlour here, I will tell you all I know about it."

Mr. Roſs followed him, and ſat down, breathleſs with ſurpriſe.

"You muſt know, Sir," continued he, "that when Lord Sandford and Mr. Beaumont, with the confectioner and his wife, left this, after opening the ſtreet-door for them, I was going up ſtairs with a card of invitation to dinner from Lady Priſcilla M——'s. Juſt as I came to the door, I heard Mr. Temple ſcolding at my lady, and ſaying a great many ſhocking things; at laſt he ſtruck her, threw her againſt the wainſcot, and cut her head dreadfully; he then opened the door, ruſhed by me, and quitted the houſe. I immediately rang the bell violently, and Mrs. Betty came up. I had taken my poor lady in my arms, and ſays I—'Mrs. Betty, Mr. Temple has killed my lady—I will take my oath of it.'—'Yes,' ſaid Mrs. Betty, 'he

'he paſſed by me in a great hurry, and never once looked at me—indeed, indeed, my poor lady!—Run for a ſurgeon!'—I ran off for a ſurgeon; and juſt as the wound was dreſſed, and ſhe again ſettled, Mr. Beaumont returned, and was ſhewn up to my lady's room: for his buſineſs has made a great noiſe; and Mr. Temple is gone off, and there is a great ado. But my mind miſgives me that my lady won't hold out long; however, let her be what ſhe will, ſhe has been as good a miſtreſs as any in England.—They ſay that my young Lord is no Lord at all, and that he is a baſtard, and an uſurper, and I don't know what; and that he is a beggar, and ſo is my lady;—but ſhe has been kind to me, and while ſhe wants a ſervant, I will never leave her, be ſhe ever ſuch a beggar."

"Thou art an honeſt fellow, I believe," ſaid Roſs, "and here is a guinea for you; go and learn if I can ſee your lady."

The man went off, and ſoon returned, ſaying his lady had juſt fallen into a doze, and could not be diſturbed.

" Don't ſpeak of it, Sir," ſaid he, with a low bow ; " but I thought it very unkind of Lady Mary Wanſlow, who uſed to be ſo fond of my lady.—As ſoon as we recovered ourſelves a little from the fright and ſurpriſe, I told Mrs. Betty—' You know,' ſaid I, ' Mrs. Betty, we are but ſervants, and I think it would be very right to go to Lady Mary Wanſlow, and acquaint her of the ſad ſituation our poor lady is in ;—beſides, if we do not, Lady Mary may be diſpleaſed ; for you know, in a manner, ſhe is like my lady's own ſiſter, they be ſo fond.'—Mrs. Betty approved very much of my notion, and I immediately went off to Lady Mary. I enquired for Mr. Chignon, and told him of the ſtate my lady was in, and requeſted him to inform Lady Mary of it directly ; he ſhrugged his ſhoulders, and left me.—A long time paſſed without his appearing, and I waited

waited very impatiently, as I did not know, but my preſence might be wanted at home. At laſt he came down ſtairs, and running to me—'Oh dear!' ſaid he, 'I forgot quite, but Lady Mary deſired me to tell you ſhe knew no ſuch perſon as Mrs. Marchmont.' —Struck dumb at what I heard, I raiſed my eyes to aſk him again to repeat what he had ſaid, but I found him gone; and looking round the hall, and ſeeing nobody, I thought it was no place for me, ſo I walked home. When I came in, I enquired of Mrs. Betty how my lady did; ſhe anſwered very poorly, and that ſhe thought we ought to ſend for a phyſician.—'We muſt take care of her ourſelves, Mrs. Betty,' ſaid I, 'for every body now in her trouble forſakes her.'—'Ah!' ſaid Mrs. Betty, 'it is the way of the world.' —I fetched a phyſician," continued the footman, "and theſe four days ſhe has been in a high fever; the wound continues very painful, and the ſurgeon told me, juſt now, it was very bad indeed."

Mr. Roſs now told the footman to come to him when his lady awoke, and that he would remain at home until he either heard from or ſaw him; he then left the houſe—that houſe abandoned and forlorn, ſo late the noiſy ſcene of mirth and gaiety; he ſhut himſelf up in his room, and began, perhaps for the firſt time in his life, calmly to reflect on the paſt, the preſent, and future. He was ignorant of any connection between Temple and Mrs. Marchmont, and, with the reſt of the world, conſidered the preſent Lord ſon of Captain Frederic Marchmont, her huſband, and the real heir to the Belmore title and eſtate. He knew Mrs. Marchmont was frail, but he knew many other ladies, very highly reſpected and regarded by the multitude, as much ſo; and he therefore claſſed her with Lady Mary Wanflow, and a hundred other Lady Bab's, and Lady Helenas, with a long train of &c. &c. and of courſe reſpected her character as much as many of thoſe of the higheſt faſhion. But when thoſe atrocious crimes of murder, fraud,

fraud, uſurpation, and every thing that humanity ſhudders at, came in queſtion, he felt as awakened from a dream, and began to feel that a perſon guilty of ſuch complicated vices, was really a character not publicly to be countenanced; and therefore, though he condemned Lady Mary for not privately conſoling the perſon whom once ſhe called friend, yet he thought ſhe might have proper reaſons for appearing to drop her acquaintance. He therefore reſolved to comfort and aſſiſt the unfortunate woman, but to do it privately, to prevent her from feeling herſelf entirely friendleſs; and that if ſhe was reduced to poverty, he would ſhare with her while he had any means of doing ſo.

Thomas, the footman, came to inform him that Mrs. Marchmont was too ill to ſee him, and he ſeemed to think ſhe would not live. Mr. Roſs deſired ſhe would have the beſt medical advice, and enquired whe-

ther there was money to defray the expence. Thomas ſaid, yes; for, on his lady finding herſelf deſerted by Lady Mary Wanflow, ſhe told her own maid, Mrs. Betty, in his preſence, that in the pocket-book ſhe then gave her, there were Bank notes for one hundred and twenty pounds; and in her purſe were twenty-five guineas and ſome ſilver;—ſhe ſaid ſhe had an high opinion of her honeſty, and alſo of mine, to manage it as well as we cou'd in our care of her during her illneſs; and, ſhould ſhe die, we ſhould find we had been remembered by her in her will, which was in the hands of her banker, who had been a great friend of her dear father's.

"Well, Thomas," ſaid Mr. Roſs, "there is money enough for the preſent; when it is out, I ſhall ſupply any that may be wanting, as Mrs. Marchmont has no friends near her."

"My

" My lady was very rich," ſaid Thomas, " that I have a right to know."

Mr. Roſs walked down ſtairs, and Thomas followed. There were circumſtances about Roſs which appeared to indicate him a man of birth; ſome excellent qualities often ſeemed to break forth, as if from under the diſguiſe of his manners, which were diſſolute and trifling; his mind was not vitiated, he loved truth, and there was a candour and openneſs in his whole deportment, united with a face and perſon ſtrikingly handſome, that procured him the love of his aſſociates, and highly recommended him to the notice of the fair.

Lady Mary Wanſlow felt the full force of his perſonal perfections, and, at the period we now bring our hiſtory to, we find her engaged in an affair of the heart;—that heart, which had been hitherto filled only with groſs paſſion, now really felt all the torments of

of refined love. Her tranſient flame for Chignon was no more, and Chignon we find ſuffering not quite ſo much from jealouſy as formerly; for Roſs latterly has remained whole hours with Lady Mary without Chignon conceiving one pang. We cannot pretend to ſay to what cauſe this was owing, but certainly Chignon's violent paſſion for his lady was much abated, poſſibly owing to its violence in the beginning; as it is a juſt obſervation, that whatever is over violent cannot be laſting. When Sir William and Mr. Temple went together to Wanſlow Park, we find it at the higheſt, ſince which period we know it has been gradually on the decline; the whole family were then in the greateſt ſpirits and happineſs, from the influx of money that has been related; and Sir William's abſence, ſo *à-propos* to the lovers, was no diminution of it.

Mr. Roſs, on quitting Thomas, ſtrolled in a thoughtful mood to Lady Mary Wanſlow's.

ſlow's. When he appeared before her, the ſcene was ſomewhat changed from that of their laſt meeting: in the firſt effervescence of paſſion and indignation, which the diſcovery of his feeling for Mrs. Marchmont's misfortunes occaſioned her, ſhe felt hatred and contempt for him; but an abſence of ſome hours brought calmneſs to the amiable and gentle Lady Mary's rage, which had now ſubſided into love, and harmony, and all the ſoftneſs of the tender paſſion.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

WEAK minds are ſeldom conſtant.—Sir William Wanſlow latterly became almoſt as fond of Roſs as he had been of Temple, and when you met the Baronet, you might be certain Mr. Roſs was not far behind; poor Sir William was delighted that it at laſt had been in his power to draw the attention of Lady Mary to his favourite, for ſhe had the art to perſuade him ſhe thought Roſs unqueſtionably the ſtupideſt of all human beings. It is wonderful how ſome women lead their huſbands; but that the poſſibility of this is every day ſo fully proved and univerſally acknowledged, we ſhould be apt to wonder that any man could facilitate all his wife's

wife's ſchemes of infidelity as Sir William did; his growing partiality for Roſs was of two or three months ſtanding, but when he found that Temple was gone to France, Roſs became more neceſſary than ever; nothing could recompenſe his abſence for ever ſo ſhort a time—he inſiſted on his diſcharging his lodgings, and reſiding totally with him.

"It will be charitable," ſaid he, "to fill up Temple's place, and ſave us from dying of ſolitude and *ennui*."

Roſs gladly accepted the Baronet's invitation, and the arrangement was beyond what even Lady Mary herſelf could have looked for. Roſs, an inhabitant of her houſe, the intimate friend of her huſband, opportunities of being eternally in private with him, and neither Temple nor Mrs. Marchmont to break in upon them—Ye Gods! what a ſituation for Lady Mary Wanflow!

It

It was now approaching that month that, in the idea of Sir William, fashion sanctioned for retirement, who kept up strictly to its laws, he being one of those wise heads who are clearly of opinion that a man may as well be out of the world as out of the fashion. He ordered preparations to be made for departure, on a certain day, from Cheltenham to Wanslow Park.

Lady Mary's woman asked permission to go ten miles off, to see some of her friends, prior to her quitting that country, Gloucestershire being the place of her nativity; and Sir William was obliged to spend the day with a friend of his before his departure.—It was truly laughable to hear poor Sir William requesting Ross to remain at home with Lady Mary, as he expected to be out late, and she unfortunately happened to have no engagement for that day. Ross said he would do his utmost to prevent Lady Mary from feeling too severely the want of either his

his company or amuſement. Sir William kiſſed his amiable conſort, and, with a few more injunctions to Roſs, ſprung into his phaeton, and drove towards the ſeat of his friend.

This was a golden opportunity for the lovers, and they reſolved not to miſs it; the amorous Roſs preſſed the no leſs amorous Lady Mary, and with Chignon, who had dwindled from the lover to the truſty confident, placed as ſentry on the poſt to give notice in caſe of a ſurpriſe, they retired into Lady Mary's dreſſing-room. Long, however, they had not enjoyed this eagerly wiſhed-for happineſs, when they were rouſed by a quick rap at the door; and Chignon whiſpered through the key-hole, in a great fright, that Sir William was coming up ſtairs.

Conſternation and diſmay now ſeized the lovers; for this room was inſide the drawing-room, and there was no paſſage by which an eſcape

eſcape could be effected; there being but one door beſides that which led from the drawing-room, and that was into a cloſet, the key of which Sir William always kept, as there were depoſited his money, fiſhing-tackle, &c. To this cloſet the Baronet was making with all ſpeed, and neither Roſs nor Lady Mary, in their confuſion, knew what to do; there, however, chanced to be a large, old-faſhioned ſofa, with a prodigious high back, which, though old-faſhioned, was of admirable convenience, when in the noon-tide heat Lady Mary uſed to retire in the ſweet ſolacing converſation of a friend, to recover theſe fits of languor with which ſhe was often ſubject to be oppreſſed;—to this ſofa, therefore, they had recourſe, to conceal from the ſight of Sir William his ineſtimable friend; but what was their diſtreſs on finding it too low to be crept under! Sir William's ſteps approached.

"Here, here," ſaid ſhe, "for God's ſake get behind it!—Gracious Heaven!"

"But

"But your dreſs," ſaid Roſs, who at laſt was able to ſpeak, "the diſorder of your dreſs will diſcloſe all."

This had never ſtruck her Ladyſhip in her fright; ſhe now began to tear off her cap, and throwing a large wrapping gown about her perſon, ſhe was ready by the time Sir William rapped at the door: ſhe had let her hair fall over her face to hide what ſhe thought neceſſary, or might wiſh to conceal from her beloved ſpouſe.

Chignon, when his maſter entered, was careleſſly lolling at the window, with his apron on, and his combs in his hand, as if waiting to dreſs his Lady's hair.

"Well," ſaid Lady Mary, kiſſing Sir William, "that's a good one for coming back;—ſo you will not leave me to-day?"

She kept his back to the ſofa, which was quite out from the wall, and had a moſt unuſual

unuſual appearance, and which, had Sir William noticed, he need have made no further enquiry, or had the leaſt doubt of his wife's infidelity; but, unſuſpicious, he looked only to approve, and told her he was d——d ſorry to diſappoint her, but that he had only returned for ſome money, as he had found, when he was more than half way, he had but a few guineas in his purſe, and that he knew there would be high play.

"So," ſaid he, "don't keep me, my beſt love, for I ſhall be monſtrous late."

"Monſtrous late indeed," ſaid Lady Mary; "do ſend off a ſervant to ſay you were detained, and don't quit me to-day; we ſhall have dinner in an hour—I was juſt beginning to dreſs for it; and there are no leſs than three things you are remarkably fond of.—Come, Willy, will you ſtay with me, and never mind this naſty party?"

Sir

Sir William preſſed her hand, kiſſed her cheek, and telling her it was one of the impoſſibilities, he proceeded to his cloſet. Lady Mary followed, and as he returned through the room again, ſhe kept her face before his eyes, entreating him to indulge her by ſtaying at home until ſhe got him out of the dreſſing-room and part of the drawing-room before ſhe let him go; then calling loudly for Chignon to dreſs her hair, Sir William aſked where Mr. Roſs was, and Chignon anſwering he was gone to ride, he once more aſcended the phaeton, whiſtling away, unknowing what he ſought, and, driving off, Lady Mary made the beſt of her way into the dreſſing-room.

Chignon, following after, popped in his head to ſee what was become of Roſs; but when he ſaw him crammed behind the ſofa in a ſad ſituation, perſpiring from every pore, he ſhook his ſides with laughter, till he made Lady Mary laugh alſo; and dragging Roſs from his lurking place—

"Why where could maſter's eyes be," ſaid he, "not to ſee all that was to be ſeen here?" and then turning Roſs about, he began to laugh again. After putting the ſofa to rights, and bruſhing ſome of the duſt off Roſs's coat—"Well," ſaid he, "the coaſt is clear—now ſhall I ſtay and dreſs my Lady's hair?" looking ſignificantly as he ſhut the door.

This was a day big with the fate of poor Sir William; for he found at his friend's a large party, which contrived, before three o'clock the next morning, to eaſe him of every ſhilling he had about him, and ſome thouſands beſides. When a cool head and reflection came with the following day, it is not to be expected that he enjoyed either ſpirits or good humour; and when Lady Mary found at breakfaſt ſomething ſullen in his manner, ſhe ordered the coach, and aſked him if he dined at home that day?—He replied, yes; and ſtarting up, he quitted the houſe.

houſe. Roſs looked at Lady Mary for an explanation.

"Don't look frightened," ſaid ſhe, laughing, "the poor fool, I ſuppoſe, has loſt more money than he knows how to pay, and a happy thought has occurred of ſome means of raiſing it; ſo he is gone off to ſeek his fortune, that's all. Come keep up your ſpirits."

Roſs aſſured her in her company his ſpirits were always afloat, and never more than at preſent—that his happineſs was complete.

But we muſt leave them together, and return to Sir William, who was now in the utmoſt ſtate of diſtraction. He had a debt of honour to pay by a certain day, and he had no means to make up the quarter of it; every ſhilling he had to take him out of the town of Cheltenham, and there were heavy bills, was loſt the preceding night.—Temple out of England, Roſs not worth a guinea—

Elated with this hope, his ſpirits roſe; and hearing Lady Mary was in the drawing-room, he lightly tripped up ſtairs, and appeared before her with as much gaiety as ſhe had ever obſerved in his manner.

Convinced, from the change in his ſpirits, that the dilemma, that had thrown ſuch a gloom over his countenance in the morning, was removed, the idea paſſed off, and her mind returned to the ſubject which engaged her attention at his entrance; ſo thinking his company and careſſes moſt intolerable, ſhe got up to leave the room almoſt as ſoon as ſhe ſaw him enter it.

Sir William, happy at finding her alone, and anxious to realize his certainty, rapid in his actions and ſchemes, and inconſiderate of the means to bring them to effect, gave no time for thought, and was incapable of argument. Without penetration or quickneſs of perception, his plans were ever ſeen through by others, almoſt before they were

were known to himſelf; and when he called to Lady Mary not to leave him, ſhe threw herſelf into a chair, out of temper at his intruſion, with—

"Well, Sir William, what now?"

Regardleſs of her evident unwillingneſs to be detained, and the unpropitious diſpoſition he found her in, he abruptly diſcloſed his ſituation, and begged ſhe would oblige him with the neceſſary ſupply, which ſhe ſhould be immediately repaid. The ſuddenneſs of the requeſt, it being the firſt of the kind he ever made her, and her thorough conviction, from a perfect knowledge of his character, that he would never apply to her while there was a poſſibility of his obtaining money from any body elſe, ſtruck her with horror, and ſhe ſaw in a moment his total ruin was arrived; ſhe looked aghaſt, and too much occupied by theſe dreadful reflections, ſhe made him no reply. Sir William, not knowing how to account for

Elated with this hope, his ſpirits roſe; and hearing Lady Mary was in the drawing-room, he lightly tripped up ſtairs, and appeared before her with as much gaiety as ſhe had ever obſerved in his manner.

Convinced, from the change in his ſpirits, that the dilemma, that had thrown ſuch a gloom over his countenance in the morning, was removed, the idea paſſed off, and her mind returned to the ſubject which engaged her attention at his entrance; ſo thinking his company and careſſes moſt intolerable, ſhe got up to leave the room almoſt as ſoon as ſhe ſaw him enter it.

Sir William, happy at finding her alone, and anxious to realize his certainty, rapid in his actions and ſchemes, and inconſiderate of the means to bring them to effect, gave no time for thought, and was incapable of argument. Without penetration or quickneſs of perception, his plans were ever ſeen through by others, almoſt before they were

were known to himself; and when he called to Lady Mary not to leave him, she threw herself into a chair, out of temper at his intrusion, with—

"Well, Sir William, what now?"

Regardless of her evident unwillingness to be detained, and the unpropitious disposition he found her in, he abruptly disclosed his situation, and begged she would oblige him with the necessary supply, which she should be immediately repaid. The suddenness of the request, it being the first of the kind he ever made her, and her thorough conviction, from a perfect knowledge of his character, that he would never apply to her while there was a possibility of his obtaining money from any body else, struck her with horror, and she saw in a moment his total ruin was arrived; she looked aghast, and too much occupied by these dreadful reflections, she made him no reply. Sir William, not knowing how to account for

her manner, feared ſhe was ill; that conſideration baniſhed every other, and kindly taking her hand, and looking up in her face—

"Is my love ill?" ſaid he.

"Ill," repeated ſhe, in a tone and manner that petrified him, "ill!—Good God! are you not totally ruined?"

"Totally ruined!" echoed Sir William.

"Yes, fool," ſaid ſhe, "do you not know the import of theſe words?"

"What words?" ſaid the terrified Baronet.

"Fool, ape, blockhead," ſaid ſhe in a rage, and ſtamping with her feet; "tell me—anſwer me—are you not ruined?"

"Ruined!" ſaid Sir William.

"Is the booby then my echo?" demanded ſhe, almoſt choaked with paſſion.

"Echo!" repeated he, in amazement.

She took up a book that lay on the table, and throwing it at his head with all her might, ſhe

ſhe flew out of the room, pulling the door with violence; ſhe then ſhut herſelf up, and gave free vent to her fury; nor did ſhe make her appearance till dinner time, when ſhe conducted herſelf with ſo much ſullen compoſure and contemptuous eaſe, that the poor uxorious Sir William began to think he had really offended, and did all he could to ſhew he had forgotten her paſſion, and the outrageous effects of it.

A party for that night engaged the attention of Sir William, and apparently that of Lady Mary alſo. Roſs's reflections were divided between Mrs. Marchmont's ſufferings and his own happineſs.

The next morning found the wretched Baronet torn by diſappointment, for he had again ventured to ſpeak to Lady Mary, who, though ſhe learned a confirmation of her ſuſpicions, ſhe abated ſome portion of her violence. She had laid her plan, and after hearing all Sir William had to ſay, ſhe

coldly told him that one part of his diſtreſs alone ſhe would conſent to relieve.

" As to your debt of honour," ſaid ſhe, " that you muſt yourſelf ſettle ; I ſhall not bring ruin upon my own head, I do aſſure you, merely to ſatisfy your feelings ;—you ſhall never pay away my future ſupport to ſharpers and gameſters. I never play myſelf, and I think you might have employed your time to a better purpoſe than in ſacrificing your paternal eſtate, which was a good one, your character, and your health at the gaming-table."

" Then indeed I am ruined paſt redemption," ſaid he.

" I am ſorry for it," replied her Ladyſhip, " and I admire the noble principle that actuates you to bring the ſame ruin upon me ; I therefore deſire you will trouble me no more with your diſtreſſes, and be aſſured, once for all, I ſhall never pay a guinea for you. The bills due here, indeed, I ſhall diſcharge,

diſcharge, and our travelling expences to Wanſlow Park; but there, Sir William, my payments for you ſhall end."

She aroſe with much *ſang froid*, and left him immerged in wonder, diſtreſs, and every feeling that can rend the human heart.

I have before ſaid Sir William was a man of no reflection;—he felt the torments of a child when deprived of a favourite object; he thought himſelf the moſt unfortunate, the moſt wretched fellow breathing, and would have thanked any man who would have ſhot him. He remained kicking his heels againſt the legs of a chair for ſome time, and at laſt fetching a deep ſigh—

"After all," ſaid he, "it is as good to be merry as ſad, d—mme!" and calling for his hat and cane, he left his houſe, and began his ſolitary walk again. He met, how-

ever, two of the company who had ſeen him loſe ſuch ſums of money a night or two before, and each taking him by the arm, pulled him away to the billiard-table.

The firſt game he won, by which he realized two hundred. This gave him ſpirit; he purſued his luck, he played the game capitally, and at the hour of five he was a winner of upwards of eight hundred pounds. Away flies care, Sir William's himſelf again—all his diſtreſſes are at an end; and thinking no more of ſorrow or trouble, he, in two or three nights, won back ſufficient to ſettle his debts of honour, and to pay his bills, all which he exultingly told Lady Mary. This gave her as little pleaſure as his ſorrows gave her pain; ſhe began to treat him with contempt and ſcorn; ſhe knew he was ſo run down that his head was barely above water, and a week, nay, perhaps a night, might ſee him reduced to a ſtate from which he could never more hope to riſe. She began, thre-

therefore, to execute part of the plan ſhe had formed on the day ſhe threw the book at his head. She was naturally fond of money, and when the laviſh and generous Sir William had it, ſhe might command what ſums ſhe pleaſed from him, whoſe greateſt pleaſure was ſharing it with her, and gratifying her every wiſh.

If the reader will recollect, Temple was the perſon who made up the match, who, a little prior to the writings being drawn, &c. &c. told Sir William it was a d——d thing to ſhackle his eſtate with a ſettlement, and that he would adviſe him to ſettle Lady Mary's fortune on herſelf, and make any addition to that ſum he thought proper.—In the fulneſs of his heart and the violence of his love, Sir William added ten thouſand pounds, which was paid down on the day of marriage to her Ladyſhip; and one of her principal pleaſures, ſince that time, has been in multiplying and adding to that ſum all

all ſhe could conveniently ſpare from the ample allowances and preſents of the fooliſhly fond Baronet; ſo that by the time we are now ſpeaking of, ſhe had increaſed the original thirty thouſand pounds to forty-five thouſand, which ſhe calculated would ſerve her extremely well when ſeparated from Sir William, which, from her own feelings, ſhe judged might not be impoſſible.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

LET us now return to Mrs. Marchmont, whom Roſs privately viſited; and, contrary to the opinion of thoſe about her, ſhe was recovering faſt. Roſs adminiſtered all the conſolation in his power, yet he felt a dread when he pondered on the murder ſhe had committed, and always felt relieved when he quitted her apartment. He kindly told her, while he poſſeſſed any thing, ſhe muſt not want, and bade her candidly inform him ſhould ſhe at any time ſtand in need of his aſſiſtance.

"It is, you know," ſaid he, "only receiving ſome of your own money back again."

She

She felt his kindneſs, yet ſhe perceived his eſtrangement; ſhe was conſcious her evil deeds had robbed her of his good opinion, and ſhe experienced a degree of penitence; but ſhe was one of thoſe characters that would return to the path of virtue only becauſe danger lurked in that of vice.

The night before Sir William's family were to leave Cheltenham, Mr. Roſs was ſummoned to the door by Thomas, who, breathleſs with alarm, begged Mr. Roſs, as it was then dark, would come to his lady's houſe, as he wanted to ſpeak to him in ſecret. Roſs followed, and when Thomas got him into the parlour, he told him dreadful reports had been ſpread among the people of the crimes committed by his lady.

"Crimes," ſaid the poor fellow, "I am ſure ſhe never had the heart to commit; a friend of mine cautioned me of it not an hour ago, having fears that our houſe may

be pulled to the ground; and if the mob can get at my lady, they will tear her to pieces."

"Then," ſaid Roſs, "ſhe had better go off, if ſhe is able, before morning."

"That would look," ſaid Thomas, "as if the reports were true."

"It is impoſſible to diſſuade a mob," ſaid Mr. Roſs; "the ſafeſt way is to get her off."

He then ſent him to know if he could ſee her, and finding her much mended, he broke the matter in the gentleſt manner he could. Mrs. Marchmont was terrified, and made immediate preparations; and at two o'clock ſhe and her own maid in one poſt-chaiſe, and Thomas with a female ſervant in another, ſet off for London, where ſhe arrived ſafe, but extremely weakened by the agitation of her mind and journey.

The reports had circulated faſt, and the number of additions made to the original

ſtory

ſtory was aſtoniſhing; neither probability nor poſſibility were at all conſidered neceſſary, and at the time Mrs. Marchmont left Cheltenham, there was hardly a crime that was not imputed to her. All firmly believed the murder of her firſt-born ſon to make room for the greater favourite, her ſecond, by Temple. Roſs even did not doubt it, for he had been delicate in mentioning his thoughts or ſuſpicions to Mrs. Marchmont, and ſhe rather avoided the ſubject of her misfortunes; ſo that there never had been an eclairciſſement between them, and this unfortunate woman lay under the ſtigma of a crime that charity inclines us to think her nature would revolt at.

Early indulgence by a father and mother, who for worth and integrity were patterns to mankind, firſt taught her headſtrong paſſions to gain ungovernable ſway over her reaſon; indeed they ſcarcely ever ſlept—their courſe was never checked, and they led her to the commiſſion of crimes not to be atoned for;

for; ſhe acted like a fiend, and was equally inſenſible to pity, and the qualms of conſcience. She was now left to the torture of thoſe feelings which a long habit of vice ſuſpended, but not totally annihilated. Bereft of friends, character, peace, and all that wealth which had been her God, in terror left ſome public and heavy puniſhment awaited her, no human being to comfort or conſole her, every apartment in her houſe brought ſome ſcene of injuſtice or debauchery to her mind;—all, all theſe dreadful workings of the ſoul combining with the hurry of a long journey in her weak ſtate of health, brought her to ſuch a point of miſery as ſeemed to threaten a derangement of intellect. Want ſtared her in the face; her money was all gone, nor had ſhe a perſon to whom ſhe could apply for relief.

She had written to her ſon to follow her to London, where ſhe expected him every day, and whom, as ſhe had never loved, ſhe dreaded to ſee; he had been at Briſtol Wells, where he was ſent for the recovery of his health,

health, naturally delicate, and not amended by the injudicious care of his mother.

Roſs, who poſſeſſed great good-nature, wrote alſo to the Lord and no Lord, and gave him the heads of the diſagreeable affair that ſo lately came to light, in order to ſave his wretched mother from a taſk that muſt be conceived to have dreadful effects on her.

On the arrival of her ſon in Golden Square, ſhe was in ſuch a ſtate as made it impoſſible to talk to him on any ſubject, much leſs on thoſe that brought ſuch corroſive and diſtracting feelings. Thomas, therefore, was the perſon who informed him of particulars, and when he found his mother had been guilty of murder, he ſwore he would not ſtay a day in the houſe; for though Thomas palliated every thing as much as he could, his honeſt heart inſpired him with the idea of its being better to tell thoſe truths himſelf to his young maſter, whom he could ſoften and

and conſole, rather than he ſhould learn them from ſtrangers, and be doubly ſhocked.

"I will not ſtay here," ſaid he to Thomas; "my mother will murder me alſo, that I may be no longer a ſhame to her. Beſides, Thomas, I cannot ſhew my face—I ſhall be followed through the ſtreets—ſhall be a by-word to all.—No, Thomas, I will not, cannot ſtay."

This young man partook of the diſpoſition of both his papa and mamma—he was poſſeſſed in a high degree of the cowardice of the former, and avarice of the latter; from a boy he was fonder of hoarding money than any other thing in the world; he had ſome large ſums, which both Mrs. Marchmont and Roſs thought, like other young men, he had ſpent, ſafely depoſited where he regularly received the intereſt of it, and by agreement it was ready for him in one month from the firſt notice of calling it in; he therefore that evening went to his friend's,

gave

gave the neceſſary notice for calling in his money, and taking a room up three pair of ſtairs in High Holborn, to ſave the expence of a more creditable and commodious apartment, he ſat himſelf down to conſider what he had beſt do. Every night he went to an adjacent porter-houſe, for the benefit of drinking a pint of that ſoporiferous liquor, and reading the newſpaper; he thought much of purchaſing a ſmall houſe with ſome ground, and if he could ſuit himſelf with a tract of land, to employ himſelf in farming.

Here then we find the *quondam* Lord Belmore enjoying all the luxury of a three pair of ſtairs room in High Holborn, and the enviable ſociety of a porter-houſe, ſo ſuitable to a man who ſo lately conſidered himſelf a Peer of the Realm, deſcended from a noble line of anceſtry, with an ample fortune to ſupport that dignity which peculiarly belonged to his rank in ſociety. Nature, however, never deſigned him for the place he had filled; he was much more ſuited to the line

he

he was marking out for himſelf;—his terrified imagination painted a thouſand dangers attending his ſtay in England; he feared he ſhould be included in the puniſhment that awaited his mother, whom he now looked on as a monſter, and dreaded nothing ſo much as ſeeing her again, convinced that he alſo ſhould fall a ſacrifice.

Mr. Temple, whom he now conſidered his father, was gone off, and this ſhewed him the abſolute neceſſity of his doing ſo too; for though he was come to thoſe years that we may ſuppoſe he was too well informed and verſed in the laws of his country, particularly as being born an hereditary counſel of the Crown, yet, alas! we find him utterly deficient in that point, and moſt ſincerely wiſh, for the welfare of old England, that he was the only inſtance where we ſhould find that a Peer of the Realm and an able legiſlator were not ſynonymous terms. His weakneſs of mind did not permit him the power of reflection, nor was he

he ſenſible that he was in no wiſe anſwerable for the iniquity of his parents;—all his thoughts were how he could get away undiſcovered, and where he ſhould make his retreat. He conſidered a long time whether Ireland or America ſhould be his choice; the former at length appeared to him attended with leſs danger and more advantages, and under the feigned name of Brown he conceived he might remain unknown, in a remote ſituation. Thus reſolved, he waited only the expiration of the time for the payment of his money, which amounted to ſome thouſands, every ſhilling of which he intended taking in caſh with him, telling thoſe few friends in whom he confided, that he was going to America, to miſlead the public enquiry.

Let us now look in at Wanſlow Park, and ſee the ſtate of that family. They arrived ſafe from Cheltenham, and a large party, as uſual, joined them; the theatre, however, was this year neglected;—it was a whim

whim of Sir William's—he had got tired of it, and it never was a favourite purſuit of Lady Mary's; other feſtivities took place which the Baronet now fancied he liked better, and nothing was ſeen but gaiety, cheerfulneſs, and conviviality.

Lady Mary forgot all diſagreeables, and treated the meek Sir William with the utmoſt kindneſs, which never failed to throw him into the higheſt ſpirits; and ſhe ſignified to him her wiſh of remaining a month or ſix weeks longer in the country, perſuading him it was infinitely more the *ton* than going to town ſo early in the winter. A wiſh of her's had been always with him a law; he perfectly agreed with her, and ſaid—

"We ſhall have all the town wondering what is become of us, which will be charming; every body will be ſo glad to ſee us arrived at laſt, and we ſhall open the winter with a grand maſked ball.—Beſides, my love, you know I have promiſed you one,

for that which you ſo kindly gave up to oblige me."

Lady Mary was placidity itſelf—ſhe was ſo humble, ſo obliging, ſo mild, the Baronet never was ſo happy in his life; with Roſs for a friend and companion, and ſuch a woman as Lady Mary for a wife, what muſt he not have been to be inſenſible of his enviable ſituation, of his bliſs, the happy lot of but the favoured few!—Lulled in this imaginary ſtate of happineſs, Sir William's time paſſed ſmoothly on, while it was Lady Mary's attachment for Roſs only that ſweetened her exiſtence;—ſhe now firſt began to live, for ſhe never before had really loved; her nature ſeemed changed—that noble and refined paſſion ſubdued her ferocity; all envy, hatred, and malice ſeemed to be extinguiſhed in her breaſt, and to know Lady Mary now, was to know a character where latent virtue might have been ſuppoſed always to have dwelt. Rural ſcenes were thoſe only that delighted her; leaning on Roſs's

Roſs's arm, groves and plantations, though leafleſs, charmed her beyond all the pleaſures of a London life, and ſhe began deeply to regret her being obliged to remove from Wanſlow Park. It was totally impoſſible, however, to remain; Sir William could not live from St. James's Street; play indeed now was his only ſupport, and her remaining without him with Roſs was too glaring an impropriety; but the time now drew near when ſhe muſt quit.

"How horrid," ſaid ſhe one day, as ſhe walked alone with Roſs through a thick evergreen ſhrubbery, "to be obliged to leave this retirement, that you have taught me to like!—never, methinks, ſhould I wiſh to leave it."

"And is it poſſible," ſaid he, "that you intend to do ſo?—Should not all mankind bow before you, and why not make Sir William alſo?—Is he to be conſidered when your pleaſure is in the caſe?"

"Alas!" ſaid ſhe, "what can I do?"

" Fly with me," ſaid Roſs, " and leave him to thoſe purſuits in which you take no part.—I will not, I cannot, by Heaven! be ſeparated from you;—keeping meaſures with this idiot makes me mad.—What reſtraint to our pleaſures!—are we not this moment ſubject to be overheard, diſcovered?—Days paſs tediouſly on in expectation of what we are ſo ſubject to be diſappointed of; the liberty we do enjoy only ſerves to make me pant for more;—the little of privacy accident allows us, is embittered by fear, and a thouſand apprehenſions that rob me of the ecſtacy your company always affords.—What is the world to us?—we love, are beloved; have youth, health, ſpirits—why then deſtroy thoſe days of delight, and waſte away what cannot be recalled?"

" You ſurely ſpeak," anſwered Lady Mary, " without any intention, without perceiving the meaning your words convey. Fly with you!—for Heaven's ſake explain—what can you mean?"

" Mean,"

"Mean," replied Roſs, throwing his arms round her waiſt, "I mean to take you from all the world, and fly away with my angel where no malignant eye ſhall deprive me of that bliſs you alone have power to give. With your Roſs are not all countries alike?—Come, Oh! come then, and leave this paltry, this wretched Sir William—a little time will moſt probably involve him in ſuch difficulties as muſt draw down ruin upon your head as well as his.—You have no children to bind you to ſuch a blockhead; fly then, fly with your Roſs to the charming ſcenes of Italy; we ſhall there enjoy, in fulneſs of happineſs, thoſe rural ſylvan ſcenes you have lately got a reliſh for.—We will go, my ſoul's beſt treaſure, and wander together through the plains of Lombardy;—we will mount the Alps and Apennines, and refreſh ourſelves in ſome hoſpitable ſhepherd's cot.—Love will harmonize our ſouls, we will viſit the groves of mulberries, and ſaunter in the rich orangeries;—the verdant banks of the Brenta ſhall teach us that the

Venetians only enjoy life; and when their ſoft and pathetic muſic ſtrikes our ears, wafted through the waters and along thoſe enchanting ſhores, our ſouls, inſpired by love, will feel the ſublime delights of thoſe ſcenes, and live anew.—Oh! let me beſeech you—let me plead with all the impaſſioned tenderneſs I feel ſubdues me, to liſten to my ſcheme of endleſs happineſs, and fly from this dark and duſky climate to thoſe regions where true delight is only to be found.—Oh!" ſaid he, "let me teach you the power of Italian muſic on a mind inflamed with all the charms of love."

She threw her head on his ſhoulder.

"Alas!" ſaid ſhe, "you have already taught me to die for ſuch ſcenes."

"Then why heſitate?" ſaid he, preſſing his lips to her's; "can you have an objection?—Do you doubt the happineſs that awaits you?"

"No,"

"No," ſaid ſhe, faintly, and looking languiſhingly in his face; "what are you tempting me to do?—Oh! too fully you know your power over me—is there any thing I can refuſe you?"

"Then, then you are mine—wholly mine," ſaid he, in a tranſport bordering on frenzy, "and will fly with me from this dolt—this poor Sir William."

"Yes," ſaid ſhe, "my ſoul loaths him."

"And mine," ſaid Roſs, "how muſt you ſuppoſe I am affected when I ſee him ſit near you, and take thoſe liberties the character of a huſband ſanctions."

The ſound of footſteps approaching put an end to the final ſettlement, and Roſs had only time to ſay—

"Write your ideas that I may execute the means of eſcape, and let it be to-morrow night—I can no longer bear delay."

She nodded aſſent, when they were joined by Chignon, who came up familiarly by the ſide of his Lady, and began to talk to her. Roſs, fierce and paſſionate in the extreme, madly attached to Lady Mary, could have ſtabbed on the inſtant any man that barely ſeemed to like her; he darted a look at Chignon that quite petrified Lady Mary, for Roſs conſidered him as only her confident—he never thought him to have been a favoured lover. She pulled Chignon by the coat, unſeen by Roſs; and ſlipping a ten pound note, which ſhe had been trifling with, into his hand—

"You know, Roſs," ſaid ſhe, "Chignon is our friend."

Chignon made a bow, and ſaid he did not m'an to offend.

Roſs ſeemed diſſatisfied and angry, and on the valet quitting, he ſaid he did not like

like him, and was very ſorry they were in his power.

"Be liberal to him," ſaid Lady Mary, "and we ſhall always keep him our friend; he is a worthy fellow, but he is ignorant and familiar, becauſe he is uneducated, and knows no better."

"I do not like him," repeated Roſs.

"Poor Chignon!" ſaid ſhe, "I will not ſuffer you to think ill of him."

"Theſe moments are too precious," ſaid Roſs, "to waſte on that raſcal.—Remember you are determined, and to-morrow night——"

Juſt at that moment Sir William's whiſtle warned them of his approach, who came to ſeek them. After ſauntering about a few minutes, Roſs, as ſoon as he could, took off Sir William, who ſaying the day was monſtrous cold, inſiſted on Roſs drinking ſome Madeira to make him warm.

" I have been walking faſt, Sir William," ſaid Roſs, " and you know I never drink any thing in the morning."

" Well, come," ſaid the Baronet, " you have no objection to ſee me drink a few glaſſes."

" Oh not the leaſt," ſaid Roſs, who was delighted to leave Lady Mary, to ſettle all matters for his approaching happineſs.

Lady Mary had long wiſhed to bring about this point, and had very great uneaſineſs leſt Roſs ſhould not urge it; ſhe anxiouſly wiſhed to quit Sir William, and longed for the liberty a foreign country with the man ſhe loved would give her. All now lay within her power, and her heart bounded with joy; her plan had been ſettled in her own mind before ſhe left Cheltenham, but it was impoſſible to go off from Wanſlow Park. Money is very neceſſary on ſuch an arrangement, and ſhe muſt ſpend ſome days in London before ſhe could draw her's from where it was, and lodge it in ſuch

a manner as her remittances ſhould not lead to a diſcovery of the place of her retreat. This was a circumſtance that never occurred to Roſs in the violence of his hurry to take her off; ſhe therefore took the firſt opportunity of informing him, that as their ſtay in the country was fixed to two or three days, and eight or ten were neceſſary to tranſact her buſineſs in town, a ſpace of about three weeks, perhaps, muſt elapſe ere every thing could be finally adjuſted to enable her to comply with his wiſhes.

This was a ſad delay to the impatient Roſs; however there was no remedy, and he was obliged to moderate his anxiety. There had been ſome little bickering between him and Chignon, which offended the latter prodigiouſly; he had long diſliked Roſs, but it was now ariſen to ſuch a pitch, that he meditated his downfall, and only waited an opportunity to ſacrifice him to his reſentment. The preſent plan Roſs had inſiſted on keeping a ſecret from the valet, and

Lady Mary alſo thought it moſt prudent; but Chignon was beforehand with them: he had heard all their ſettlement for their foreign tour, and being maſter of their ſecret, he of courſe was likewiſe ſo of them, but this he cautiouſly kept to himſelf.

Lady Mary now wiſhed to get to London as faſt as poſſible, and Sir William being no leſs anxious for the gaming-table, orders were given for removal, and they arrived in Portman Square in the utmoſt gaiety and good-humour. The blooming cheek and ſparkling eye of Roſs revealed to Lady Mary the glad ſenſations of his ſoul. Time moved on with leaden wings, though ſhe did all ſhe could to divert his impatience; ſtill he complained of the tardineſs of its motion, and again Lady Mary endeavoured to conſole him. Every thing was getting as forward as poſſible, and the day before that they were to ſet off, Roſs was ſitting with Sir William, arguing a point on the game of billiards after breakfaſt, when a ſervant informed

informed Sir William a gentleman wiſhed to ſee him.

Though the Baronet ordered him to be ſhewn up with all the noiſy good-humour in the world, thoſe viſits never failed to cauſe a ſecret pang; his affairs were in ſuch a ſtate that he dreaded he did not exactly know what, and when the ſtranger appeared, his look and manner did not ſerve to eaſe him of any uneaſineſs his arrival had cauſed. He was one of thoſe dull, methodical, buſineſs-looking men, and there was a profeſſional air in his dreſs and addreſs that ſtruck poor Sir William to the ſoul. Roſs got up to leave the room on the entrance of the ſtranger, but he was prevented by the Baronet, who found a protection in the preſence of a third perſon.

"My buſineſs," ſaid the ſtranger, "is of ſuch a nature as perhaps, Sir William, you would wiſh to keep ſecret."

Sir

Sir William trembled, and with a faltering voice ſaid he had no ſecrets from his friend; every nerve, however, ſhook with the idea of ſome dreadful important misfortune; he was anxious to be relieved, yet feared to aſk, and waited in breathleſs expectation in ſilence. The ſtranger at length opened his buſineſs by informing him that Mr. Temple had, prior to his leaving England——

Theſe words brought to the affrighted mind of Sir William peace, and his eyes lit up; he felt relieved from a violent preſſure—nothing bad could come from Temple, he thought. The gentleman continued.

"Mr. Temple, Sir William," he repeated, "prior to his leaving England, made over to me a right of calling in all his debts; and as you ſtand his debtor to a pretty conſiderable amount, I have taken the liberty of calling on you to know when you will be able to diſcharge the mortgages, as I have

poſitive

poſitive directions to loſe no time on the buſineſs."

"I ſhould ſuppoſe there was ſome miſtake in this affair," ſaid Sir William; "I am certain my friend Temple would not diſtreſs me."

The ſtranger was ſilent.

"I am convinced," ſaid Sir William again, "Temple would not inconvenience or diſtreſs me;—Roſs, what do you think?"

"I really," replied Roſs, "think he would not."

"There is another heavy debt, Sir William," ſaid the ſtranger, "I am alſo entitled to ſue for—fourteen thouſand pounds on your ſingle bond."

"Something thereabouts," replied Sir William.

"When will it be convenient to you to diſcharge that debt?"

"What the whole?" ſaid the aſtoniſhed Baronet.

"Yes,"

" Yes," replied the ſtranger, coldly.

" Why really," ſaid Sir William, " perhaps in about three months—it may be in my power ſooner, or perhaps not quite ſo ſoon;—it is according as things may turn out."

" Can you not fix a ſhort and certain day for the payment?" ſaid the man; " if you can, it would ſave us all trouble."

" Why no," ſaid Sir William, heſitatingly, " not a certain day."

The man aroſe and quitted the room, with a bow to the two gentlemen, and was out of the houſe before Sir William had preſence of mind to go after him, to entreat, to beg time, or to learn any neceſſary queſtion reſpecting ſo momentous an affair.

" Temple to ſerve me thus," ſaid Sir William, " what is to be done?"

" And do you owe Mr. Temple thoſe great ſums?" ſaid Roſs.

" I fear I do," he anſwered.

" And

"And did Mr. Temple never call in the money before?" ſaid Roſs.

"Never," anſwered Sir William, "never."

"Then depend upon it this perſon, who was here juſt now, will write to Mr. Temple, and inform him it is not convenient to you to pay off this money, and you will hear no more of it for the preſent."

Unverſed in all money tranſactions, this was Roſs's real opinion; and poor Sir William, glad to catch at any thread that would take off preſent ſorrow, ſwallowed with avidity the pleaſing idea, and ſaid—

"Roſs, you are perfectly right; this man will write to Temple, who will never preſs me when he finds it will be inconvenient to me."

With this he became perfectly ſatisfied, and walked out.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

ROSS repaired inſtantly to Lady Mary, and repeated *verbatim* what had paſſed.

" Then," ſaid her Ladyſhip, " that man will oblige Sir William inſtantly to pay him."

" Would to God," ſaid Roſs, " I could get you out of the way before any thing happens !"

" Don't terrify me to death," ſaid ſhe.

" No, my angel;—but let me entreat that we may ſet off to-night. You are engaged to a ball and ſupper; neither Sir William nor the ſervants will expect you home until it is very late;—and as Sir William will be

be at the gaming-table till early in the morning, he will not think of making any enquiry, ſo that, ſhould he purſue us, we ſhall be many hours in advance, and of courſe make our paſſage good before they can arrive at Dover."

"I tremble ſo," ſaid Lady Mary, "that I am not able either to ſpeak or think, ſo do you do every thing that is neceſſary;—but take me from ſuch ſcenes as would be worſe to me than death."

"Take you," ſaid Roſs, preſſing her to his heart, "yes, I will take you from ſcenes improper for you to witneſs, and protect you with my life.—Dreſs yourſelf for the ball—I ſhall do the ſame; and by going to Drury Lane in your coach before you go to the ball, I ſhall leave you in the lobby until I ſee your ſervants and carriage off, and then we can ſtep into a hackney coach, and drive to where I ſhall have a chaiſe and four in waiting, and be out of Sir William's power before you know where you are."

"I

" I think the ſcheme a good one," ſaid ſhe ; " leave me, and prepare for it. But this will be neceſſary," giving him a pocket-book containing five hundred pounds in notes, which ſhe had prepared, and had now nothing to do but reflect ; that, however, ſhe had no head for, ſo ſhe got into her coach, and went ſhopping.

When the hour of dinner arrived, Sir William was abſent ; they waited a quarter of an hour, and began to wonder why he did not appear ; another quarter paſſed, and no Sir William. Chignon was ſummoned.

" I really think, my Lady, Sir William will dine out to-day—your Ladyſhip had better go to dinner."

" Do you think ſo ?" ſaid Lady Mary ; " then let dinner be ſerved."

" Don't you perceive ſomething odd about that raſcal ?" ſaid Roſs, as Chignon ſhut the door.

" No, I cannot ſay I do," replied ſhe.

" I

"I don't like him," ſaid Roſs; "there is ſomething malicious in his countenance of late."

"He has got himſelf quite out of your favour, I perceive," replied Lady Mary.

"I wiſh we were fairly rid of him," rejoined Roſs.

His re-appearance prevented all further converſation, and they ſat down to dinner in high ſpirits. About ten minutes after Sir William joined them.

"What at dinner!" ſaid he.

"Chignon was of opinion you would not dine at home, and it was ſo much beyond the uſual hour, I became of the ſame mind," ſaid Lady Mary.

"It does not ſignify," ſaid Sir William.

There was ſomething in his manner and the tone of his voice that attracted the attention of Lady Mary—ſhe looked in his face, and was ſurpriſed: there was that plainly marked

marked in it, that, had ſhe been an affectionate wife, would have filled her ſoul with ſorrow; it for a moment made an impreſſion, but the next wore it off.

Sir William talked loud and faſt, and ſeemed to hurry as if to get rid of his own thoughts. As the cloth was removing, her eyes met his; he had been ſilent for a moment--ſhe ſaw him eagerly gazing at her, and a tear fell on the lapel of his waiſtcoat; he ſtruck his forehead with his clenched hand, got up from the table, took his hat, that lay on a chair near him, and darted out of the houſe. The ſervants looked at each other.

"Alas!" ſaid Roſs, as he left the room, "I fear Sir William is totally ruined."

"Things are bad enough, I believe," ſaid her Ladyſhip. "It gets late--I muſt go and dreſs."

Sir

Sir William did not return, nor did Lady Mary make any enquiry. At the hour for the play she got into the coach with Rofs, and told Chignon she would go with Mrs. Berkley in her coach to Cavendish Square, and that she should not want her own carriage until three o'clock in the morning, as she should not leave the ball till that hour at leaft.

Chignon faid he would be fure to give her orders with particular attention.

The fervants of Lady Mary being anxious to go to their own amufements, gave very little delay to the lovers; the coachman wheeled off at a round trot, and carried the footman in place of his Lady:—Rofs engaged a hackney-coach, that had juft drawn up with company, to wait for him, and flying for Lady Mary, they got, unperceived among the crowd, into it, and drove to their place of deftination.

Though

Though Sir William's appearance affected Roſs, and lowered his ſpirits, he now forgot him and his diſtreſs, and gave himſelf up to the moſt extravagant rapturous joy.

"Oh how my ſoul dotes upon you!" ſaid he, claſping Lady Mary in his arms; "you are mine, mine beyond all the powers on earth—this is happineſs ſupreme!"

"Would we were out of the power of Sir William!" ſaid Lady Mary. "I know his furious paſſions, when once rouſed, would lead to our annihilation, did he come up with us."

The coach ſtopped; they alighted, and walked a ſtreet or two, and then got into another.

"This eludes all ſearch," ſaid Roſs, as he drew up the window; "and ſhould Sir William even come up with us, I am his match, and will defend you with my life."

"I

"I doubt your being his match in ſtrength," ſaid Lady Mary; "we have no faithful attendants, and within this hour ſtrange horrors come upon me—I almoſt faint."

"It is the hurry and the dread of putting into execution a long concerted plan to lead to life, to love, and happineſs.—Oh my ſoul's idol! your nerves are only flurried a little; reſt will quiet them again."

"My nerves are ſtrong," ſaid ſhe; "I have never found them thus before—a cold and ſickly dew is creeping over all my frame—I hardly can ſupport myſelf."

"Then lean on him who will ſupport you with his vital breath—ſupport you and ſhield you even from the ruffled breeze.—Look up, and be yourſelf again."

"Alas! it is in vain," ſaid ſhe; "I know not what can ail me."

The coach now ſtopped where the chaiſe waited, and Roſs found ſome difficulty in getting Lady Mary out of the coach; the

air, however, refreſhed her, and ſhe grew better.

The horſes flew; gold gave them wings, and all ſeemed propitious to their flight.—As Roſs had no confidential ſervant, and would not conſent to take Chignon, there were no horſes prepared for them, and they met with ſome delay at both Rocheſter and Canterbury; and when they arrived at Dover, they found they could not ſail till night, and there was a doubt of even ſailing then. The weather was thick and hazy, it was alſo very windy; the bodily illneſs of Lady Mary went off, but her ſpirits were fled, and ſhe felt greatly depreſſed, which was ſo unuſual to her, that ſhe thought a night's reſt would be abſolutely neceſſary to reſtore her health and ſpirits.

Roſs was anxious to get to the other ſide if poſſible, though he wiſhed to indulge her; yet he thought it dangerous to loiter, and preſſed her by all means to go on.

" By

" By hiring a particular veſſel we ſhall be able to ſail to-night; and perhaps after you dine, you will be ſtronger, and better able to encounter the ſea, which I have heard you ſay you did not mind."

" No," ſaid Lady Mary, " I am never ſick; yet I have taken an unaccountable fancy for ſtaying here this night—I am really afraid to go to ſea in this weather, and I entreat you not to preſs the matter farther; I feel an alarm I can no way account for, and therefore I wiſh to indulge, not brave any preſage of evil I find hovering about me."

" Not for worlds," ſaid he; " compoſe yourſelf, and I ſhall get the beſt bed I can for you. Perhaps, as you have been up all night, you may wiſh to lie down now."

No, ſhe ſaid ſhe would wait until night, and ſhe ſhould then ſleep the better.

After dinner ſhe appeared rather more cheerful, but ſtill complained of a ſad

oppreſſion; ſhe ſtarted when ſhe heard any body enter the room. All theſe ſymptoms of fright and agitation Roſs concluded to proceed from her apprehenſions of Sir William overtaking them; but Lady Mary repeated to him that ſhe did not think he could.

"Nobody knows our route," ſaid ſhe, "and he will rather ſuppoſe we are ſtill in London."

She drank two or three glaſſes of wine extraordinary, but all would not do; ſhe would ſtart in ſuch apparent agony, that Roſs was ſeriouſly alarmed.

"Oh Lady Mary!" ſaid he, "in doting, everlaſting love I will repay you for all this ſuffering;—my ardent paſſion hitherto has been only in its infancy—how it has matured theſe two days! and it now blazes forth in its full ſtrength.—My darling love, it can never decay; its foundation is too firm ever

ever to be ſhaken; and while life animates my breaſt, it will ever remain the ſame."

Theſe warm and ſincere aſſurances from the man ſhe loved, ſeemed to rouſe her a little; and, leaning on his breaſt, ſhe burſt into tears.

"Ah," ſaid Roſs, "you repent leaving Sir William—you would return to him."

"No," ſaid ſhe, re-animated, "I never was ſo happy as at this moment—could I conquer the horrors that have taken poſſeſſion of my mind;—I try to throw them off, but they will recur."

Roſs exerted every power to amuſe her, and the packet ſailing early, they were glad to retire between nine and ten o'clock to bed. When Roſs looked at the door to make it faſt, he found the key would not turn in the lock, and there was no bolt. When he had fixed on the bed-room, he left his piſtols on the table, and he was going to

ring the bell to try if the chamber-maid could manage the key ſo as to faſten the door; but when he conſidered that Lady Mary was in bed, he gave up the idea, and went to bed alſo, without even putting a table or chair againſt it.

We ſhall now return to Sir William, whom we left in a ſtate of mind few are in a ſituation to envy, on the morning he quitted Mr. Roſs, after the interview with Mr. Temple's ſolicitor, which had a very unpleaſant effect upon him; for though he gave Temple credit for more virtue and humanity than he poſſeſſed, by ſuppoſing he would not diſtreſs him, yet while he walked alone, he could not help recurring to the ſcene juſt paſſed, and conſidering that if Temple did inſiſt upon immediate payment, his eſtate muſt be ſold, and that muſt bring inſtant and certain ruin on him; neither his perſon nor his houſe were ſafe. This idea diſtracted him.

" My

"My wife," ſaid he, "what will become of her, ſhould ſuch ſcenes come under her eye?—It will kill me, d——d villain as I am, to have brought diſgrace and ſhame upon her on whom my ſoul fondly dotes.—We ſhall be ſeparated—I ſhall ſee her no more—and a priſon will be my future abode.—Great God! how could I have run on thus in folly and extravagance!—Yet may I not reclaim all by good fortune?—This night may ſet me up again.—I was laſt night pretty ſucceſsful—a few more ſuch would put me out of the power of fate."

Whenever Sir William got into theſe fits of thinking, he walked very faſt; and he had made his way acroſs Weſtminſter Bridge, and had paſſed Clapham Common a conſiderable diſtance, when the idea of winning in a few nights what would ſet him at reſt for the remainder of his life, brought him quite to himſelf; and recollecting where he was, made him inſtantly turn back, and direct his ſteps to Portman Square, reſolving

the whole way that when he had paid all his preſſing debts, he would ſet down quietly, and never again venture to put his beloved wife in danger of what he had ſo much dreaded two hours before.

As he was croſſing the Horſe Guards he was met by Chignon, who told him he had come out on purpoſe to meet him, and begged he would retire, as he had ſomething of conſequence to communicate that it was abſolutely neceſſary he ſhould know.—Sir William ſtarted.

"Don't be alarmed," ſaid Chignon; "you will be able, I hope, to redreſs your wrongs every way."

They turned into the Bird-cage Walk, which was at that time quite empty.

"The gentleman that was with you to-day——" continued Chignon.

"What

" What of him," interrupted Sir William, haſtily, turning as pale as death.

" He was from Mr. Temple," ſaid Chignon, " and Temple is a raſcal."

" From whence did you get your knowledge?" ſaid Sir William, in an angry tone.

" I ſhall inform you of that," ſaid the valet, " another time;—at preſent I wiſh to put you in the way of warding off a very diſagreeable affair.—Do you not owe, on your bonds to Mr. Temple, a very large ſum of money?"

" I do," ſaid Sir William.

" Then," ſaid Chignon, " both your perſon and goods will, in the courſe of two or three days, be ſeized for it."

" Gracious Heaven!" ſaid Sir William, " how do you know?"

" Do not wait to learn; but act as you think beſt for your own ſafety."

" I ſhall go and conſult Roſs," ſaid Sir William.

" He is a villain," ſaid Chignon.

"Hold," ſaid his maſter, "he is my friend."

"He is the greateſt enemy you have upon earth, except Temple," ſaid Chignon; "he will do you no good, but all the harm in his power."

"Impoſſible!" cried Sir William.

"Will you believe me," ſaid the valet, "if I give you proof?—Put yourſelf under my direction, and I ſhall help you to your revenge on your enemies."

"Has Roſs then joined Temple," aſked Sir William.

"He has to deſtroy you," anſwered Chignon.

"Shew me but this," ſaid the Baronet, "and they ſhall both fall a ſacrifice to my fury."

"Then be entirely guided by me," ſaid Chignon; "go this moment, and provide yourſelf with all the money you can, and I will bring you up with your enemy before theſe law proceedings can affect your houſe."

"What

" What ſhall I do with my beloved wife?" ſaid Sir William; " it will kill her."

" Say not a word, on your life," ſaid Chignon, " either to her Ladyſhip or Mr. Roſs, until you meet them far from London; and I ſhall take every care of her. You ſhall find her coming after you, elſe ſhe would be too much ſhocked with the ſituation of things; and the delay may prove of the moſt ſerious conſequences if you give the leaſt hint of your knowledge of the matter, and I ſhall break every thing to my Lady.—I think, after ſo many years' knowledge of me, you will truſt me with the management of the whole affair;—I believe you can have no doubt of my fidelity."

" Not the leaſt indeed," replied the Baronet.

" I muſt be off," ſaid Chignon, " to prepare;—but be ſure to leave not a ſhilling behind you—take every guinea you can get."

Sir William had upwards of five thouſand pounds in his houſe; he inſtantly re-

turned home, and ſecured the money; from thence he went to a gentleman who appointed to pay him ſome hundreds at four o'clock, which Sir William would not have thought of calling for had not theſe ſudden diſtreſſes come upon him; he therefore thought of the appointment, and received his money. This kept him a conſiderable time after the dinner hour. Chignon had not explained; his thoughts were in the utmoſt tumult, and when he arrived at home, and beheld that object he had never ceaſed to adore, on the point of leaving her home, and becoming habituated to ſcenes of diſtreſs from his folly, it was almoſt too much for his brain. He tried to diſſipate his thoughts; he gazed at her with eyes ſuffuſed with tears, and a heart filled with woe;—at Roſs he looked with horror; he thought him joined with Temple in forcing theſe payments, and every moment while he remained in his own houſe, he expected to be ſeized, and fancied Sheriffs' Officers were diſguiſed under his own liveries, and that even his ſervants were plotting againſt his

his liberty. Chignon followed him when, in a tranſport of indeſcribable miſery, he left his dinner-table, and fled out of his houſe.

" Have you got all your money?" ſaid Chignon.

" I have," ſaid Sir William.

" Then," ſaid Chignon, " at the corner of Baker Street you will find a chaiſe and four waiting for you; ſtep into it, and make the beſt of your way to Dover, where I ſhall meet you in the mail, with all of value I can carry off."

Chignon knew Sir William would be there ſome hours before Lady Mary.

The Baronet found the chaiſe, ſtepped into it, and drove like the wind. Chignon returned, and while the ſervants were at dinner, he packed up all the moſt valuable plate, it being under his care, and putting it into a hackney-coach, lodged it ſafe to go that night to Dover, took a place for himſelf in the

the mail, and was back in Portman Square time enough to dreſs his Lady's hair; and when he put her into the coach, he flew to the mail, and had got ſome miles before the runaways ere they entered the chaiſe, ſo that he well knew no poſting in England could overtake him.

When he arrived at Dover, he found Sir William in bed; and waiting for ſome time to allow his unfortunate maſter to refreſh himſelf a little, he ſaw, unobſerved by them, the arrival of the lovers. Sir William, overcome by fatigue and agitation, did not awake until Mr. Roſs and Lady Mary were ſat down to dinner; Chignon provided his maſter with a dinner he liked, and a bottle of good Madeira, which he inſiſted on his taking in his bed-room;—he ſhewed him all the plate he had ſafely lodged, and received the greateſt applauſe from him for his adroitneſs.

"But

"But where is Lady Mary?—tell me what you have done with her," ſaid Sir William impatiently.

"She is very ſafe," ſaid Chignon; "you ſhall ſee her this night."

When he found his maſter recruited by ſleep, a good dinner, and excellent wine, he then began to break to him Lady Mary's connection with Roſs, her total diſaffection to him, and that if he would remain perfectly quiet in his room, he would convince him, before twelve o'clock that night, that every ſyllable he told him was literally true.

Sir William's rage now bordered on infanity.

"If they are in the houſe," ſaid he, "I will ruſh upon them this moment, and put them both to death;—that villain, Roſs, ſhall not eſcape my vengeance, nor ſhall ſhe live to delude mankind.—No," ſaid he,

" by Heavens! I will not let them breathe the air another day."

Chignon told him they deſerved the puniſhment that awaited them;—he was falſely wronged by Lady Mary, who richly deſerved being made a dreadful example of; but that the effectual way was to remain perfectly quiet until the proper time, when he might take ample revenge. By theſe arguments Sir William was induced to curb his rage and impatience, and wait till the proper opportunity made his vengeance ſure.

When Chignon had taken care of his maſter, he viſited the bed-room ordered by Roſs, and while he was making love to the chamber-maid, he contrived to draw the balls from Roſs's piſtols, and render them of no uſe againſt Sir William, for whom he knew Roſs to be no match. Sir William had no ſword, but Chignon took good care to provide two; he alſo was provident for his maſter's retreat, by having a chaiſe and four

four of the beſt horſes he could procure in readineſs, into which he depoſited all the moveables he had brought with him to Dover.

About twelve o'clock, when the houſe was pretty quiet, he told Sir William he would now convince him of the infidelity of Lady Mary, if he would calm himſelf a little.

" Lead," ſaid Sir William, graſping his ſword, and breathleſs with fury, " lead on. If I find them together——" He was almoſt choaked with rage; articulation was denied him; he leaned againſt the wall for ſupport.—" Infamous woman!"

" Why," ſaid Chignon, " why are you thus unmanned?—Courage, Sir William! and do yourſelf juſtice on that raſcal; but take care of yourſelf—he is reſolute, and may have arms."

" D——n his arms!" ſaid Sir William; " an injured huſband's ſingle arm ſhall annihilate

annihilate his coward ſoul, and ſend it to perdition!"

"Huſh!" ſaid Chignon; "if you will not quiet this ſtorm, I cannot, muſt not venture farther;—the houſe may be alarmed, and danger to ourſelves ariſe."

"Well, well lead on, and I ſhall do as you pleaſe."

The truſty valet took a dark lantern he had prepared, and paſſing ſoftly on, Sir William following cloſe behind on tiptoe, they opened the chamber-door. Fatigue had diffuſed a double portion of Nature's kind reſtorer, balmy ſleep, upon the lovers; and when Chignon ſoftly drew back the curtain, Sir William beheld them locked in each other's arms, totally unconſcious and undiſturbed. This ſight worked up Sir William even to madneſs. Chignon ſlipped off leſt he might be ſeen; Sir William graſped the throat of Roſs, and crying, "villain!" plunged his ſword into his heart, as he thought; he then ran round to the other ſide of the bed, and putting

putting his hand on Lady Mary's throat alſo, to prevent a noiſe, he raiſed the ſword, juſt reeking with the blood of Roſs, to do the ſame; but nature, love, and womaniſh weakneſs unnerved his arm, and ſinking on the bed, he cried—

" Oh Mary, Mary!" and fainted away.

Chignon now came to his aſſiſtance, and ſeeing Lady Mary unhurt—

" Vile woman!" ſaid he, " thou ſtrumpet of Temple and half a hundred more—thou ſhalt not thus eſcape the puniſhment due to thy crimes.—Chignon is jealous alſo—you promiſed to be faithful to me;—take this!" ſaid he, ſtabbing her with a ſhort dagger he had in his boſom, " and this!" ſaid he, again repeating the blow. He then took Sir William off, put him into the chaiſe that was in waiting, and giving the poſtboys a guinea each, ſet off full ſpeed for Brighthelmſtone, where they got ſafe; they then embarked

embarked on board a veſſel Chignon immediately hired, and the wind being favourable, they in a ſhort time were landed at Dieppe.

On the way Chignon gave Sir William a full account of Lady Mary before her marriage, which he had of Winkfield; of Temple's connection with her; of her advances to himſelf; and, laſtly, her intrigue with Roſs.

"Did ſhe not beſides," added Chignon, "refuſe to aſſiſt you with a guinea?—Seek Temple, Sir, wherever he is; his injuries to you are not to be forgiven;—make him refund the money he cheated you of, or fight you;—he is a coward, and you will recover every guinea of him."

"Seek Temple!" ſaid Sir William, "yes, I will ſeek him through the earth—vengeance ſhall direct my ſword's point to his heart!—By Heaven, he or I ſhall fall!"

"There is little danger of your falling," ſaid Chignon. "Mr. Temple is not fond of meddling

meddling with offenſive weapons—he will never fight you, take my word for it."

"He ſhall, by the Gods!" ſaid the enraged Sir William, "or I will tear his heart from its encloſure, and ſhew it to the world as that of the greateſt villain upon earth.—But where, Chignon, where ſhall I find him?"

"I can lead you to his retreat; it is not above a week ſince I was made acquainted with it—not a hundred miles from the lake of Geneva. My friend Winkfield lives at Geneva, and diſcovered him under the aſſumed name of Stormont."

"Then," ſaid Sir William, "we will fly thither, nor ſcarcely ſleep till my ſoul is ſatiated with revenge."

In this pleaſing hope we will leave Sir William, and return to enquire the fate of the wounded pair at Dover.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

THE wounded perſons remained unobſerved till three o'clock the next morning, when their ſituation was diſcovered by the chamber-maid, who, having riſen at that early hour to waſh, paſſed by their chamber-door, and ſeeing a ſtream of blood which had iſſued from under the door, ſhe ran, terrified at the ſight, to her maſter's room, and, pale and trembling, recounted what ſhe had ſeen. The houſe in a moment was alarmed, and a body of people ruſhed into the room; ſhocked and diſmayed at the diſmal ſcene, they had hardly power to move—each looked on the other with terror; the ghaſtly countenances, diſtorted by pain and

and weakneſs, ſtill ſhewed ſigns of life; the caps of both had been torn off, and their hair clotted with blood; the whole bed was died with the ſame; every thing lay in dreadful confuſion, and exhibited ſuch a ſcene of horror as thunderſtruck all the ſpectators.

The landlord of the inn was a ſenſible, humane man.

"The perpetrators of this deed," ſaid he, "muſt be the gentleman and his ſervant who left this a little after twelve laſt night; no other company has been in the houſe, and here has been no robbery—their watches are hanging at the bed's head."

He inſtantly ordered a ſurgeon to be ſent for; and ſtripping the clothes off to diſcover the wounds, which were ſtill bleeding—

"Alas!" ſaid he, "I fear all aſſiſtance is now too late."

On

On the arrival of the ſurgeon, who adminiſtered ſome reſtoratives, they gave ſome ſigns of life. On their wounds being examined, Lady Mary's proved to be through the cheſt and left breaſt; Mr. Roſs's through his right ſide and fat part of the belly: his wound the ſurgeon thought was not mortal, but was very dubious of Lady Mary's, who fainted, and continued in that ſtate during almoſt the whole time of dreſſing.

It was thought proper to ſearch their papers in order to learn their family, as they had no attendants with them, that their friends might be informed of their ſituation. In the preſence, therefore, of the landlord and his wife, the head-waiter, and the chamber-maid, the ſurgeon proceeded to examine their papers; for neither had power to give the leaſt information even by ſigns, much leſs to articulate. In Roſs's pocket-book they found his name, and four hundred and ſeventy pounds in Bank notes, of the five hundred given him the day before by Lady Mary;

in

in her purſe were ſixty guineas, and in her pocket book letters addreſſed to her, by which they diſcovered her name.

" I am very much miſtaken," ſaid the ſurgeon, " if Sir William Wanflow was not here yeſterday ;—I ſaw him at the window of a back bed-chamber, abour four o'clock, as I was paſſing to that poor fellow's room who broke his leg.—I have known Sir William ſince he was a boy."

" The gentleman," ſaid the landlord, " that left this with his ſervant laſt night at twelve, occupied that very room."

The whole of the affair ſtruck at the ſame inſtant every body preſent, and that it was injured honour that raiſed its arm againſt a faithleſs ſpouſe and her paramour. The landlord's wife aſked if it was not poſſible to remove them to ſeparate beds ;—the ſurgeon ſaid it was not—he would not venture, as, if their wounds bled afreſh, they muſt expire.

He wrote immediately to Lord Seal, who loſt not a moment in flying to Dover. The ſurgeon had conſulted Lord Seal's feelings in the account he gave of the dreadful ſtate of his daughter, by breaking the matter as cautiouſly as poſſible, and being ſilent as to any farther particulars than that of her wounds, and the imminent danger of her life; ſo that this truly amiable and tender father, on his arrival, received a ſhock much more grievous than death could have inflicted. He beheld his once beloved child reduced to a ſtate the moſt deplorable, the object of manifeſt guilt and ſhame;—the guilty ſcene of horror ſtruck on his ſenſes, and nearly robbed him of the apparently few years of life his reduced ſtate of health ſeemed to promiſe him; he fainted, and was taken to bed.

On his coming to himſelf he immediately ſent off for Lord Sandford, as he was incapable of acting or thinking. When his Lordſhip and amiable Lady arrived, they found

found him deſpaired of by the phyſicians; they never left him, but the ſhock he had received was too great; Nature could not ſuſtain it, his feelings were too ſtrong, his conſtitution too weak, and he expired in the arms of Lady Sandford, in the act of praying for his wretched and unfortunate daughter.

Lord and Lady Sandford mourned with the moſt ſincere ſorrow for Lord Seal, whoſe exalted rank was but ſecondary to the moſt eminent virtues; his family and friends deplored his loſs with the deepeſt affliction.

Lord Sandford wiſhed to conceal the dreadful cataſtrophe from the Duke and Ducheſs of Devon; but ere he could take any ſteps to prevent its coming to their knowledge, the newſpapers got at the whole affair, and all the connections of the guilty Lady Mary were overwhelmed in affliction through her horrible conduct.

The profligacy and vices of this moſt wretched woman may be held up as an example to the young, the giddy, and diſſipated; and Providence, as a warning to the female world, ſuffered her to drag on a wretched exiſtence for ſome years, bowed down with the moſt excruciating bodily pains; contemned equally by the virtuous and vicious, ſhe lived a burden to herſelf and on the bounty of Lord Sandford; for the banker, in whoſe hands ſhe had ſecretly depoſited her money, ſtopped payment the week after ſhe had made the depoſit, and did not leave effects to pay one ſhilling in the pound. Lord Sandford provided a proper careful woman to attend her, and allowed her, provided ſhe never again lived with Mr. Roſs, eight hundred pounds a year.

Roſs lingered out a few years without one day's health, and retired to Scotland, his native country, on two hundred pounds a-year, ſettled upon him by Lady Mary.—Had he outlived her, he muſt have wanted

the

the common neceſſaries of life; but the grave kindly opened an aſylum for him two years prior to Lady Mary's deceaſe.

The ſad news of the fate of poor Lord Seal was received at Ankerwick Caſtle with inconceivable diſtreſs.

"Alas!" ſaid Lady Middleton, "the blow was ſudden and unexpected—his ſtrength was not equal to it;—unfortunate Lady Mary, you have cauſed the death of him whoſe higheſt aim would have been your happineſs."

Mrs. Markham was prodigiouſly affected.

"Nature," ſaid this good woman, "had endowed my Lord with a moſt feeling heart—it could not ſupport the torture inflicted by ſuch a ſight as he witneſſed at Dover."

The family immediately removed to the Abbey of Devon, to conſole the Duke and Ducheſs, whoſe ſufferings were very great; for Lord Seal was juſtly endeared to them by a thouſand nameleſs perfections.

Mr. Bentley and Lady Ann arrived alſo ſoon after them at the Abbey; Lady Ann grieved with all that ſenſitive affection with which her nature abounded, and for many weeks they remained filled with woe. Mr. Beaumont and Lady Middleton prevailed with the Duke and Ducheſs to remove with them to Ankerwick Caſtle, where all the reſt of the party arrived alſo; ſoon after which the birth of another ſon gave joy not only to Mr. Beaumont and Lady Middleton, but to every individual of their connections.

The Duke and Ducheſs received new life from the playful gambols of the little cherub, William, who was juſt now two years old—an age when the infantine ſports never fail to delight the fond parent, whoſe partial eye fancies

fancies the fire of future genius beaming through all the little playful tricks. This lovely child was a never-failing ſource of delight to the good old Duke and Ducheſs, for the child of their beloved Gertrude was the child of their old age; they felt themſelves renewed in the offſpring of their darling grand-daughter, who was as dear to their hearts as her adored mother had been.

The day Lady Middleton changed her apartment after her illneſs, a letter arrived from Mr. Henry;—it was written from the Cape, and came by a ſhip juſt ſailing as he arrived there; it was the firſt opportunity he had of writing ſince he left India, and he embraced it with joy. He pathetically expreſſed his loſſes to Mr. Beaumont, and releaſed Mademoiſelle M—— from her engagements. Halt and maimed, he dreaded a meeting that muſt ſhew him the full diſappointment of all his future happineſs; entreated Mr. Beaumont to break his misfor-

tunes to Lady Middleton, as he knew how much ſhe would ſuffer at hearing the child of her kind adoption was thus mutilated and deſtroyed, with blaſted proſpects, returning an object ſhe would commiſerate.

Youthful fancy had offered to his warm imagination a different picture; and he felt a degree of pain equal to any he had ever ſuffered at diſappointing her expectations. To have anſwered the kind wiſhes of Lady Middleton would have been ſuch a bleſſing to Colonel Henry as would compenſate for any ſelf-ſuffering. Under her benign influence he had travelled the flowery path of life ſo ſmoothly that he had not a wiſh ungratified; the world preſented eternal ſunſhine, and when ſhe beſtowed Mademoiſelle M—— upon him, his cup of bliſs was full.—But now how changed the ſcene! He thought of that lovely girl no more, and the ſad certainty that ſhe could never be his, hung a cloud of ſuch thick and heavy darkneſs over his ſoul, as robbed him of hope,

hope, and filled him with deſpair. His letter to Lady Middleton was ſilent as to his misfortunes, and Mr. Beaumont did not mention to her any thing of them till ſhe was quite recovered. To Mademoiſelle M—— he by degrees opened the ſtate of Colonel Henry, and the torture of mind he ſuffered from conſidering himſelf no longer in a ſituation to be thought of by her as the future ſolace and companion of her hours.

"Alas!" ſaid the charming girl, "his mind and innate worth firſt won me—they ſtill remain the ſame; for though his face and form were ſuperior to all that fancy could portray, yet, had not virtue twined round and round the ſtately plant, and ſhed its luſtre full on every part, Henry had never been the man I had ſelected from among mankind to paſs my future days with."

Sorrow for his ſufferings threw a melancholy languor over her thoughts and manner, that was unuſual to her.

"Why, dear Mr. Beaumont," ſaid ſhe, "why ſhould Henry conjure up ideal miſery?—Tell him he is doubly dear to me, if his heart is unchanged; and tell him I am not ſo giddy as I was, and that I ſhall of courſe make a better nurſe."

As ſhe talked, joy entered at the idea of his return, and delight beamed in her countenance.

"Happy Henry!" ſaid Mr. Beaumont, "and happy Mademoiſelle M——! May health, and all its attendant bleſſings, be the lot of you both!—Think what will his reflections be, when he finds birth, rank, and ſplendid fortune await him."

"Alas!" ſaid the ſweet girl, "has he not loſt one arm, nearly the uſe of the other, and a great portion of health;—he has loſt more ſolid bleſſings than he has gained."

"I admit it," replied Mr. Beaumont; "yet ſtill Fortune befriends him:—in poſſeſſion of

of the affections of my fair friend, he muſt be greatly Fortune's debtor."

While this converſation paſſed, they ſtood at a window that looked into the park, and a ſumptuous equipage appearing, it engaged their attention; an outrider rode cloſe under them.

"I don't know the livery," ſaid Mr. Beaumont.

The carriage now paſſed, and he could not recognize it, or thoſe whom he ſaw very plainly that were in it. A ſervant came to announce to him the arrival of the Prince De Valazee and his Lady. Joy flufhed in his eye, his cheek was crimſoned with the glow of pleaſure, and he was in a moment to welcome them.

"Free of ceremony," ſaid the Prince, "we have accepted of your kind invitation almoſt as ſoon as we arrived in England;—

we have loſt not a moment in throwing ourſelves at your feet and the charming Lady Middleton's, to whom much more than we can expreſs is due."

"Oh!" ſaid the Princeſs, "is our Henry well?—He is in India, perhaps."

"He is on his way from India," ſaid Mr. Beaumont, interrupting her; "I have juſt received a letter from him from the Cape, and we may look for his arrival every day."

The raptures of both the Prince and Princeſs were extravagant.

"Alas!" ſaid Mr. Beaumont to himſelf, "I cannot now damp their joy by explaining his ſituation;" and he led them to Lady Middleton.

The extreme pleaſure ſhe received from ſeeing the brother of Selicia De ——— at Ankerwick Caſtle, and the truly amiable Lady Amelia Belmore, was viſible in the warmth

warmth of her reception of them. She traced a ſtrong likeneſs between the brother and ſiſter; there were all that majeſty of deportment and beauty of countenance that evidently belonged to her dear father's firſt wife, and though the Prince was advanced in life, he ſtill retained all the fire and luſtre of beauty that the late Lord Middleton had deſcribed him as being remarkable for; an amiable mind, placid temper, and great vivacity of ſpirits, theſe great requiſites for happineſs preſerved his countenance from ſhewing any ſigns of the many winters that had paſſed over it.

Lady Middleton perceived a ſtrong likeneſs between her beloved Henry and his noble father; ſhe mentioned it to the Prince, whoſe whole ſoul was raviſhed with the delightful thought.

Mademoiſelle M——, juſt at that moment, entered the room, ignorant of the arrival of the noble ſtrangers; but when ſhe

was preſented, a feeling new to her heart aroſe: the father and mother of Henry brought ſenſations ſhe knew not how to reconcile—it was the moment of her life on which ſeemed to hang all her future peace. The hearts of thoſe ſhe ſo much dreaded were loſt in admiration of her excellencies: the ſofteſt luſtre irradiated her whole appearance, where unaffected modeſty, meekneſs of temper, and a ſoul replete with every virtue ſhone conſpicuous; and if the portrait they drew from the rules of phyſiognomy did not deceive them, they would have choſen her, above all they had ever ſeen, for a ſiſter or a daughter.

Encouraged by the manner of the Prince and Princeſs, the lovely Mademoiſelle M—— regained all ſhe had loſt on her entrance, and a congeniality of character bound them to each other by ties that never after relaxed; and they often expreſſed to each other the effect theſe moments of introduction had upon them.

The

The arrival of Henry was now only wanting to complete the ſupreme felicity of all. In a day or two Mr. Beaumont diſcloſed to the Prince his unfortunate ſituation.—The feeling heart of the Prince ſuffered inconceivably, and by degrees he broke it to the Princeſs, who bore it better than was expected. Since his life was ſpared, ſhe ſaid ſhe was thankful. But Lady Middleton ſeemed even more diſtreſſed by it than they were; Mr. Beaumont and ſhe were ſilent as to his engagements with Mademoiſelle M——: they wiſhed her character to win their hearts unprejudiced, and they ſaw with infinite delight the admiration they viewed her with.

The Princeſs was extremely affected by the ſtory of Mrs. Marchmont, which was now related in full; Mr. Beaumont, in his letter to the Prince, having given only the heads of it.

As

As ſoon as Lady Middleton was ſo perfectly recovered as to go abroad, ſhe led the Prince into the receſs, and there witneſſed a ſcene the moſt moving, moſt affecting. The Prince was a man of the moſt exquiſite ſenſibility; and when he beheld the well-known form of his beloved and long loſt ſiſter, the length of years that intervened vaniſhed from his memory, and her abſence from his ſight ſeemed but as yeſterday, ſo freſh was his loved Selicia in his thoughts.

"Sweet excellence," ſaid he, throwing himſelf on the ſtatue, the big and manly tear rolling down his cheek, and watering the cold marble, "when the pure heart that animated the form that ſat for this exiſted, the earth contained not one ſo much an angel. Pardon me, Lady Middleton, I affect you."

She paſſed on without making any reply, and left the Prince to pay the tribute of love and affection at the ſhrine of the angelic being,

being, who merited this to her memory. He joined her, after a conſiderable time, in the next apartment, of which ſhe left the door open.

"Suffer me to lead you back to the ſtatue," ſaid Lady Middleton, "to look upon a friend who was once almoſt as dear to you as the incomparable Selicia."

"It is Middleton then," ſaid he.

"Yes," ſhe replied, "in wax—a poor artiſt has attempted his likeneſs."

"Poor!" ſaid the Prince, beholding the exact image of Lord Middleton, on the curtain being raiſed that concealed it, and gazing on it with folded hands, "it is himſelf ſurely I ſee before me."—He was amazingly agitated by the ſight.—"Leave me, dear Lady Middleton," ſaid he, "leave me to the full luxury of pleaſing grief;—theſe dear objects bring to my mind ſuch ſcenes of bliſs and ſorrow, that the contrarieties of ſenſations require ſolitude to quiet them."

Lady

Lady Middleton retired to the muſic-room before deſcribed, and taking her harp, ſhe touched the ſtrings to ſoft and melancholy muſic congenial to the temper of her ſoul. Her dear father was the object that filled it, and ſhe paid a tribute of tears to the memory of the beſt and moſt beloved of parents; her heart bled afreſh for his ſufferings, and all her feelings were awakened to ſympathy and ſorrow.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

WHEN the Prince joined her, after an abſence of near an hour and a half, ſhe told him ſhe had a treat for him he little expected when he entered the receſs.

"Follow me," continued ſhe.

He did ſo, and ſhe ſhewed him a figure in wax of a boy about fourteen.

"Henry!" ſaid the Prince, his eyes rolling with delight, and every feature animated; "Henry it muſt be—he has the glowing countenance of my loſt Selicia."

"Yes,

" Yes, it is indeed Henry," ſaid her Ladyſhip, " and I have often contemplated the likeneſs I perceived immediately on firſt ſeeing him, and which firſt won my affections. From the moment I beheld him, an invincible power attracted me to him; nor could I, at that early age, diveſt myſelf of a parental love for him."

" Oh fortunate prepoſſeſſion!" exclaimed the Prince, " Oh happy Henry! to have fallen into ſuch hands—the guardian of his principles, honour, and all the glory he has and ſhall obtain.—How inſcrutable are the ways of Providence!—To have loſt my firſt born, and found him again, nurtured in the ſoil from whence ſprings ſolid friendſhip, fraternal love, and all the ſocial affections—found him where he has been educated ſo as to add luſtre, by ſolid perfections and acquirements, to the bright diſtinctions of his birth—Oh Lady Middleton! my heart is too full of gratitude; conceive my feelings, for I cannot expreſs them—no language can give them ſufficient force."

" Suffer

"Suffer me to ſhew you my mother, the late Lady Middleton, whoſe beauty and uncommon excellence was to be ſurpaſſed only by the ſiſter you mourn."

They then aſcended to the room where, if the reader recollects, Mr. Beaumont firſt entered on the day he broke through the rules of the Caſtle, and ſurpriſed Lady Middleton in the depths of the receſs, by which he had endangered the future happineſs of his life.

"Ah!" ſaid the Prince, on entering, "here are the nine Muſes my dear Middleton brought from Italy. They are," continued he, "of immenſe value, moſt exquiſitely wrought;—they were executed by the firſt artiſt in the world; nothing in the Vatican was ſuppoſed to equal them; they were viſited as a wonderful curioſity even in Rome before they were packed for England."

He

He did juſtice to the charms of the lovely Gertrude's mother, and being a man of *verth*, he found enough in theſe apartments to delight him.

Before Lady Middleton quitted the receſs, ſhe told the Prince that Mr. Beaumont and Mr. Selwin were the only people who knew any thing of the ſtory of her father's firſt marriage; that in conformity to his wiſhes, the latter kept it a profound ſecret.

"This manuſcript," continued ſhe, "mentions the reaſons why he never entruſted it to my mother. I need not obſerve the impropriety of diſcloſing it during the life of my grandfather and grandmother —it would leave an idea on their minds of a duplicity, which my revered father's character gave no real grounds for.—I am perfectly unacquainted, you know, with the Princeſs; if you think proper to lead her into theſe apartments, I can have no objection; the avowed friend of Lord Middleton,

and

and the brother of the lovely Selicia De —— is as myſelf."

"Amelia," ſaid the Prince, "is the ſoul of honour and of truth; ſhe is your ſiſter in excellence—you will take her to your heart, her noble mind claims kindred with your own. Yes, Lady Middleton," continued he, "I glory in the diſcernment that led me to love where my reaſon has never ceaſed to approve for twenty-ſix years; and though I forfeited my father's favour, I have little to reproach myſelf with, as within theſe laſt ſix months he has been perfectly reconciled, and has lived to acknowledge my choice, had he not been blinded by prejudice, would have been his. We have only about that ſhort period returned from baniſhment, if retirement and a perfect ſecluſion from the world can be called ſo; but we found it a Paradiſe, which nothing but the calls of a father and a much lamented child could draw us from—a retirement, Lady Middleton, where peace, content, and ſupreme felicity ſweetened every hour of our exiſtence; we knew no

ſorrow

ſorrow but the loſs of our dear child, and though that filled us with the deepeſt affliction, and has ever been a ſource of pain, religion calmed our grief, and time meliorated our ſufferings: for, though bred under the influence of a Court, I learned to diſcriminate between the ſhadow and the ſubſtance of happineſs—thoſe who graſp at the former never find the latter; I was ſo fortunate as to gain the end I aimed at, and am thankful."

This converſation brought them to the ſaloon, where the Duke and Ducheſs of Devon were walking for exerciſe.

"The Duke of Somerton's family are arrived," ſaid the Duke, "in which you obſerve I include Lord Melville."

"Certainly," replied Lady Middleton, who leaving the Prince De Valazee in the ſaloon, haſtened to receive her friends.

Lord

Lord Melville was to be made happy in a month with the hand of Lady Matilda, who had totally thrown off all former ſuffering, except when the thought of the amiable Miſs Walſingham occurred; then a tear would fall to the memory of that charming diſintereſted woman, and a ſigh that ſhe herſelf, though innocently, had led her Melville from the path of honour.

Sir William Wanſlow made the greateſt haſte to Geneva, where he arrived in private. Chignon repaired immediately to his friend Winkfield, and was ſhewn by him the houſe where Mr. Temple reſided; and when they were certain of his being at home, Sir William made him a viſit. Temple affected to be extremely glad to ſee him, and, by Chignon's advice, Sir William diſſembled, as his object was to call him to account before witneſſes. After their firſt mutual enquiries were over, they agreed to walk out to ſee the town, &c. and were ſoon joined by two Engliſh gentlemen, a Mr. Naſh and

Mr. Steel, who had been known to Sir William at Oxford. When each had expreſſed his pleaſure at ſo unexpectedly meeting—

"Well," ſaid Steel, "Sir William, what was the reigning topic in the upper circles when you left London?"

"Why," ſaid Sir William, "the reigning topic in all circles, when I left London, was the unfortunate fate of the *quondam* Earl of Belmore, who turns out to be the natural ſon of Mrs. Marchmont by one of the greateſt villains upon earth: a fellow who put off his kept miſtreſs as a wife to his friend, who was young and fooliſh, and implicitly took his word and that of the world's for her character; and not ſatisfied with this, he cheated him at play of ſeveral thouſands, and then employed a profeſſional man to ſue him for the amount to his total ruin."

"Great God!" ſaid Mr. Steel, "who is this raſcal guilty of ſuch complicated villany?

lany?—He ought to be whipped out of ſociety."

"And ſo he ſhall, by God!" ſaid Sir William, collaring Temple; "I will whip your ſoul to perdition, you ſcoundrel!—This inſtant give me ſatisfaction, for by Heaven you or I muſt fall."

Temple's coward ſoul ſhrunk in diſmay, and had there been no witneſſes, he would have fallen on his knees, and pleaded to the reſolute Sir William for pardon; he offered, however, at an apology—Sir William would take none.

"Pray interfere, gentlemen," ſaid Temple; "I acknowledge I have injured Sir William Wanſlow, and am ready to make him any reparation in my power."

"Come," ſaid Mr. Naſh, "come, Sir William, what are your terms?"

"A renunciation of my whole debt to him," ſaid Sir William, "except ten thouſand pounds, which I ſtand fairly his debtor

for, becauſe he lent me that ſum; all the reſt, to the amount of thirty thouſand pounds, he cheated me of at play, and took mortgages and bonds from me to that amount."

"What ſay you, Mr. Temple," ſaid Mr. Naſh, "will you ſubſcribe to theſe terms?"

Temple wiſhed to remonſtrate.

"He knows my abſolute determination," ſaid Sir William, interrupting him; "let him give up every ſhilling he cheated me of, or his life or mine muſt fall a ſacrifice;—if he chuſes the former, I ſhall never loſe ſight of him until he delivers my mortgages and bonds into my own hands cancelled; if the latter, I am ready this moment to do myſelf juſtice, and waſh out my wrongs with his blood!"

Waſhing out wrongs with his blood, threw Temple into nervous ſpaſms, and terror made him yield to the hard terms.

Mr.

Mr. Naſh and Mr. Steel were good-natured, amiable young men; and hearing Sir William's whole ſtory, they commiſerated his ſituation, they comforted him with the hopes of the ſurvival of thoſe on whom he had taken ſuch vengeance for their great injuries towards him, and offered to accompany him, and do him all the ſervice in their power. Sir William felt highly grateful for the friendſhip thus proffered him, and they left Geneva in a few days, Sir William keeping to his word of never loſing ſight of Temple till the buſineſs was completed.

On their arrival in England, they found that both Mr. Roſs and Lady Mary were ſtill alive, and that there were hopes of their recovery.

Chignon brought an account that Mr. Temple had an execution for fourteen thouſand pounds, in Sir William's houſe in Portman Square, which was ſo large a ſum that it deterred all others from doing ſo likewiſe.

The gentleman of the law that had waited on Sir William from Mr. Temple, as recorded, was now ſent for, whom the latter ordered to bring all papers as ſoon as poſſible, as Sir William had ſettled with him, and to diſmiſs the officers inſtantly from his houſe.

Mr. Steel told Sir William that that he thought an imprudent ſtep, as the moment the houſe was cleared, others would come in, and put him to a heavy expence.

" If your eſtate is clear," continued Mr. Steel, " I ſhall ſupply you with what money you want.—I will call together your creditors, and when we ſee the exact amount of your debts, you can ſecure me legally, and I ſhall have a great happineſs in thus being able to ſerve and ſave you from many diſagreeable occurrences."

Sir William was all gratitude; and on conſulting his friends, he paid away ſix thouſand

ſand pounds the next morning, and kept the remainder of the ſum he had taken abroad with him, which was five hundred, for his preſent expences;—but he was to play no more, and this reſolution he kept inviolable.

In the courſe of a few weeks he ſettled, by the aſſiſtance of his excellent friend Mr. Steel, with all his creditors, and gave up five thouſand a-year to liquidate his debts; and, at the age of twenty-ſix, he began the great work of his own reformation and improvement. On a review of the paſt, the ſeveral characters of Temple, Mrs. Marchmont, Roſs, and Lady Mary ſtruck him with horror and wonder; his mind opened to reflection on the mad career of folly and extravagance he had run; duped by thoſe whoſe characters he never gave himſelf time to conſider, and hurried on in a full belief of their worth, he had himſelf, blinded by the ſincerity of his love, and convinced of her faith and honour, aſſiſted his wretched wife, by

encouraging her vices, and giving her opportunities to err. Had ſhe, on whom his ſoul doted, he would ſay, been chaſte, ſhe would now have been happy; or, had ſhe married a man capable of taking care of her. —Yet no; alas! ye Gods, was ſhe not Temple's miſtreſs.—In this thought there was diſtraction.

Thus would Sir William argue; his feelings were not yet taught to drive his unfortunate wife from his heart, and he reſolved on ſecretly aſſiſting her, ſhould ſhe live.—He wrote to Lord Sandford, now Lord Seal, returning him thanks for his kindneſs to the unfortunate Lady Mary, lamented Lord Seal's death, and aſſured him he had always moſt tenderly loved his ſiſter, and that no unkindneſs of his cauſed her going aſtray. The income his Lordſhip allowed her, he inſiſted on paying him yearly; though he wiſhed his late wife, as he called her, ſhould always conſider it her brother's donation.

Lord

Lord Seal conceived a higher opinion of Sir William than he thought he ever ſhould have reaſon for, and wrote him a very handſome letter, requeſting him to come to Appleby, as he ſhould be happy to cultivate his friendſhip; and aſſured him Lady Mary had done him every juſtice in his conduct towards her, and lamented that ſhe had repaid all his kindneſs with ſuch ingratitude.

This letter wrung the heart of Sir William; it awakened reflection, and led him to correct his mind, buried in the vortex of diſſipation, though not abſolutely corrupt; he ſaw that though guilt, diſhonour, and treachery may triumph for a time, ſhame, diſtreſs, and contempt will in the end be its portion when leaſt expected. He determined to accept Lord Seal's invitation for a month or two; but firſt he repaired to Wanſlow Park, where he ſhut himſelf up for ſeveral days. The ſcenes that every apartment brought to his imagination ſerved as a

great leſſon of amendment; he recalled his thoughts from the vanities he had encouraged, he looked back with pain on the life he had led, yet he felt great conſolation at the idea of his being faithful to his conjugal engagements. If he had by gallantry weaned his affections from his wife, and in any way treated her unkindly, his remorſe would have embittered his future life; but he had nothing of that kind to reproach himſelf with, and the leſſons of the ſenſible and worthy Mr. Steel ſunk deeply into his ſoul; they opened his eyes to the unſubſtantial joys he had courted, and plainly proved to him he had hitherto graſped at only ſhadows, while he loſt the ſubſtance. Mr. Steel pointed out to him the dupe he had been to ſharpers and gameſters.

"Wretches like Temple, without principle, who," ſaid he, "warped your underſtanding, blinded you by their arts, and ridiculed your credulity in being deceived."

Sir

Sir William reflected on the paſt with deep contrition; he looked with horror on the evils he ſhould now for ever ſhun, and he felt himſelf as if awakened from a viſion of ſad and dreadful phantoms, that by their evil counſels were hurrying him forward with violent impetuoſity, from which he felt himſelf as if juſt eſcaped.

He gave Chignon a handſome reward, and adviſed him to ſettle himſelf in ſome buſineſs, as he ſhould part with all his domeſtics, and only keep a groom and a pair of horſes; that he ſhould ſell his houſe in London, and have Wanſlow Park taken care of by a ſteward and his wife.

"But for this arrangement, honeſt Chignon," ſaid Sir William, "I would not part with you."

Chignon was very well pleaſed; he had played his cards to admiration, his coffers were filled by the Wanſlow family, and his revenge

on Lady Mary was gratified; it would have been more complete had he put an end to her exiſtence. He ſet off to Paris, where he intended getting into the perfumery line, and where we ſhall leave him to enjoy the fruits of his labours; congratulating Sir William that his preſent arrangements ſecluded from his perſon and family a man who helped to bring on the cataſtrophe he ſo much lamented.

At length the glad tidings of Henry's ſafe arrival in England reached the Caſtle, and in two days he was to be there in perſon. Every heart beat high with joy and exultation; Lady Middleton begged Mr. Beaumont would order every public demonſtration of joy to be obſerved on the day of his arrival.

And now poor Mademoiſelle M—— with difficulty kept within bounds the joy that filled her whole heart; ſeeing Henry returned, and ſtill conſtant to his vows, was all of earthly

earthly bliſs ſhe could deſire. Happineſs illumined her whole countenance, every feature ſpoke the joy that reigned within. Indeed the feelings of every individual animated their whole appearance; all but the Somerton family, and they endeavoured to ſuppreſs the leaſt ſhew of the pangs they could not but feel at the abſence of their dear Loveſdale;—but the accounts of his health being reſtored, and a conviction that abſence was the only remedy to bring him, if poſſible, to his former ſelf, in a great degree reconciled them to what they were ſenſible could not be avoided, and they joined in the general joy likewiſe.

At ſeven o'clock, on the morning Colonel Henry was expected to arrive, the bells of all the villages around rang, emulous to proclaim the joyous tidings; all the charity-boys and girls were dreſſed to receive him, and every ſpecies of rejoicing was in forwardneſs; there were couriers diſpatched to announce his approach, that he might, at his

his entrance into the park, receive a ſalute from the guns on the ramparts.

The Prince and Princeſs were charmed at theſe demonſtrations of affection towards their ſon; they walked out, and diſtributed large ſums among the poorer order of people: to the ſchoolmaſter, who taught the young Henry his firſt rudiments, they ordered five hundred pounds, and to every boy ten pounds each.

What a day of tranſport!—Oh how impatiently they all waited the ſignal from the battlements, but chiefly Mademoiſelle M——! She went to Mrs. Selwin's apartments, and there remained in the moſt anxious ſtate; both the good man and his wife were endeavouring to calm her ſpirits, when the guns and the ſhouts of the peaſantry proclaimed his arrival. Now all the Caſtle was in an uproar, the full band ſtruck up to the notes of martial muſic, and as the carriage

carriage wheeled along, loud echoes rent the ſkies.

Happy, happy Henry! what were his ſenſations, returned once more to his friends, to the ſcenes of his early youth, and to be thus received!—He would have ſprung from the carriage, and flown to the feet of his noble patrons—but, alas! Henry could fly no more; with the arm that was left him he waved his hat, as well as the wound would admit, to the crowds that welcomed him, and, with the help of his faithful valet and ſurrounding friends, he was taken from the carriage. His ſoul was filled with love, gratitude, and friendſhip, nor was the tear repreſſed—he ſuffered it to flow—it was a tribute to the worth of all around him, and he would not bid it ſtop.

His eager eyes ſought around for the miſtreſs of his ſoul, who ſat breathleſs in Mrs. Selwin's apartment until he was out of the carriage; ſhe then aroſe, and with quick,

though trembling ſteps, flew to him. The meeting was truly pathetic; he was in a moment relieved from the ſtate of torture cauſed by the uncertainty how ſhe might be affected towards him.

"Do you thus welcome me?" ſaid he; "am I then ſtill dear to Mademoiſelle M——?"

She threw herſelf on his neck—they wept together;—here was the triumph of love and flow of ſoul. But his appearance ſaddened all his friends: health no longer bloomed in his cheek, his eyes were dull and heavy, the fire and ſpirit that once illumined them, were departed—they expreſſed only languor and a waſted conſtitution; yet the dignity of his air remained, nor was it leſſened by the loſs of nearly two limbs.

As he was in total ignorance of the gratifying honours that awaited him, it was thought moſt prudent, from the ſtate of his health,

health, to let the agitation of meeting all his friends ſubſide, ere they made him acquainted with his ſituation, or that the Prince or Princeſs ſhould appear; they had purpoſely placed themſelves at a window to ſee him, but the feelings of the Princeſs were wrought up too high—ſhe could not command them, but ruſhing out of the room ſhe was in, and throwing herſelf on her knees before Henry—

"My ſon! my ſon!" exclaimed ſhe, and fainted away.

The Prince did not remain alone; he followed, and caught her in his arms.

Henry was all amazement; ke knew not what to make of what he heard and ſaw; and when Lady Middleton explained to him the diſcovery, ſuch a ſcene of joy, wonder, and delight enſued as requires the deſcription of a much abler pen to do juſtice to; ſuffice it to ſay, that all the fineſt emotions of

of the ſoul were awakened, and a looſe was given to the moſt tranſporting happineſs.—Oh what raptures filled Henry's heart, to find his birth and rank had juſtified the patronage of Lady Middleton!

"Here, my revered parents," ſaid he, as ſoon as he had paid obeiſance to them, "here," pointing to Lady Middleton, "is the ſtar that illumined my mind; under her auſpices have I grown to manhood—I truſt in virtue;—here have I learned to deſpiſe the refinement that fled from woe, though in the meaneſt garb; and here, under this roof, where virtue flouriſhes, have I been nurtured with parental care.—To Mr. Beaumont I owe much; and to the ſingular inſtructions of this worthy man," preſenting Mr. Selwin, "all who regard Henry muſt be grateful."

"I found his ſoul replete with virtue," ſaid Mr. Selwin, addreſſing the Prince and Princeſs; "juſtice guided his every thought and action; his early years gave promiſe of

theſe

theſe ſhining qualities, which we all witneſs time has ſince brought to perfection; his quickneſs of parts and ſolidity of underſtanding acquiring daily new ſtrength during the courſe of his education, gratified me with the fond hope of that fruit which has ſince been the reward of our labours."

What an encomium, what a panegyric for a father and mother's ear!—to find a ſon, after deploring his loſs ſo many years, and ſuch a ſon—their cup of happineſs ran over; the full heart wanted vent—joy flowed in too faſt.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

LADY MIDDLETON thought it would now be a proper time to mention Mademoiſelle M——; ſhe informed the Prince and Princeſs of their attachment, and her own conduct on the diſcovery of it, ſanctioned by the opinion of Mr. Beaumont.—Here Henry and Mademoiſelle M—— felt all the different ſenſations of hope and fear, when the Prince, with eyes ſuffuſed with tears, joined their hands.

"Oh Henry!" ſaid he, "this completes all—from the moment we beheld the purity of this angel, both Amelia and myſelf claimed her as our daughter."

The

The happy parents then poured their benedictions on their heads; the Prince had joined their hands, and Henry De Valazee, Earl of Belmore, and Mademoiſelle M—— were now arrived to that ſtate of bliſs from which they never fell.

Though every circumſtance of Henry's identity was fully proved, the Prince attended him to his chamber at night, and rubbing the liquid over the part he had marked, when he delivered his darling infant to the care of the two Engliſh women, he found the next morning his name fully appear. He ſhewed it to all the gentlemen then at the Caſtle, who admired the art.—He had purchaſed the ſecret, he ſaid, with a large ſum of money, from a Chineſe that Providence threw in his way; he little knew at the time he ſhould have had ſuch cauſe to be thankful for it.

The amiable Princeſs felt an anxiety to know the ſituation of Mrs. Marchmont; ſhe wiſhed

wiſhed to raiſe her from deſpair; ſhe pitied her for the vices ſhe could not but contemn, and ſecretly ſent an emiſſary to make the enquiry. Preparations were, in the meantime, haſtening for the marriage. Mr. Beaumont had taken every neceſſary meaſure to ſecure the right of birth and poſſeſſion to the Belmore eſtate his preſence now was to finiſh, and they were obliged to go to London. The ladies remained at the Caſtle, as Lady Middleton could not venture to town.

On the arrival of the meſſenger diſpatched to Monſieur Reynhault, the Princeſs was greatly ſhocked to learn that Mrs. Marchmont had loſt her ſenſes, and was confined in a private mad houſe; ſhe immediately ſent to the keeper of the houſe a large ſum of money, to ſecure to her relative all proper and tender care.

Colonel Henry, now Lord Belmore, rewarded Reynhault very largely, and the

Prince

Prince ſettled five hundred pounds a-year Britiſh on Mr. and Mrs Selwin for life.

When Lord Belmore was preſented at Court, he received the thanks of his Majeſty for his gallant ſervices, and commiſeration for the loſs of his limbs. A cork arm with a wax hand ſupplied the place of thoſe left in India, in the moſt adroit manner; his youth, ſtrength, and ſymmetry of form took off the awkwardneſs which, without theſe helps, would have been great diſadvantages. Eaſe of mind and a full flow of happineſs, joined to his native climate, as we may certainly term England to be, though he firſt drew his breath in Italy, reſtored his health and ſpirits: the eye was re-animated with its wonted fire, the cheek regained the freſheſt colour, and his countenance once more beamed with all its natural beauty.

On their return to Ankerwick Caſtle, the day was fixed that was to join the happy lovers in the indiſſoluble ties of wedlock; and

and Lady Matilda promiſed that that day ſhould alſo unite her fate to Melville. The chapel was to be once more illuminated, and Mr. Selwin had the ſupreme felicity of conferring on his beloved pupils thoſe rites that made them one.

The morning after their marriage the whole party ſet off for Oakley Park, to thoſe ſweet ſcenes of pure delight that had ſo much captivated Lady Middleton on a former viſit; and Lord and Lady Belmore ever preferred its ſylvan ſcenes to the more noble and pictureſque ones of Belmore Caſtle.—All Mr. Fairfax was renewed in his heirs, and the country round, as well as their immediate dependants, bleſſed the day that brought the charming pair to Oakley Park.

The bright example of Mr. Beaumont and Lady Middleton was followed by Lord and Lady Belmore. They ſuffered no miſery to come near their dwelling; they had hearts to commiſerate, and power to relieve all who were

were preſſed by the cruel hand of Poverty. No dæmon ſhed his malignant influence to diſturb their ſerenity; their peaceful days ran on undiſturbed, one continued ſcene of happineſs and bliſs.

On the arrival in Paris of Lady Belmore's family from Italy, they ſignified their intention of paſſing into England, to repay, by perſonal gratitude, their high obligations to Lady Middleton; and ſo much were they charmed with the friends they found, and the rich proſpect of happineſs that flowed in upon their dear daughter, that they reſided among the families of Belmore, Middleton, Devon, and Seal for three years, admired and reſpected.

Lady Middleton's health was ſo perfectly re-inſtated, that ſhe found no bad effects from an occaſional reſidence in London;—after the birth of the fourth child, three ſons and one daughter, ſhe regularly ſpent every

winter there; Mr. Beaumont finding it his duty to attend Parliament, to give all the aid in his power to the public welfare.

The *denouement* of our hiſtory ſays, that the Prince and Princeſs De Valazee reſided entirely England; and that Sir William Wanflow attached himſelf to Lord Seal and his friends, whoſe laudable example he followed to the end, paid all his debts, played no more, improved his underſtanding, and became a character highly to be reſpected, even in the bright circle of Ankerwick Caſtle; that he married the younger daughter of the worthy Mr. Wilmot, with whom he enjoyed a life of real happineſs. Had he fallen into ſuch hands on his entrance into life, he would have eſcaped the career of folly that nearly hurried him on to utter ruin.

Lady Mary died, a prey to bodily pain the moſt exceſſive, and feelings of the mind moſt

moſt corroſive ;—without one friend or companion to ſmooth the path to death, neglected and forſaken, ſhe ſunk to the grave, after a life of vice and infamy, fearful of what was to come in that kingdom from whence no traveller returns.

Mr. Temple met the fate due to his crimes : he found it impoſſible to remain in England ; after ſettling with Sir William Wanflow, he ventured to return to his favourite haunts, and hoped that his riches and independence would do away the effect of any reports that might have caught the ear of the world. But the whole affair was too much even for Vice to countenance ; the murder, which he was ſuppoſed to have a ſhare in, was ſo horrid, joined with the certainty of his having aided Mrs. Marchmont in the acts of uſurpation, robbery, &c. &c. the fraud on Sir William Wanflow, all cauſed ſuch an odium, ſuch a ſtigma, that, on his appearance, every man turned his back on

him. He therefore thought a different country abſolutely neceſſary, where he could retire from the ſhame and diſgrace attendant on his name and character; and he reſolved to go to America, where he expected his riches, and his being unknown, would enſure him every thing he could wiſh.

When he had arranged all his affairs, he took his paſſage on board a ſhip bound for New York, in which were a gentleman and his daughter, with a few more paſſengers. This gentleman was very ſickly and reſerved; he was taking out his only daughter to remain with her brother, who was ſettled in York Town, prior to his own deceaſe, which he looked on as not far diſtant. This daughter was extremely pretty and lively, and Temple conſoled himſelf, under all his misfortunes, by laying plans for her ſeduction. She was weak and not correct in her principles; the charms of Temple ſubdued her heart, and before they had been a fortnight acquainted,

acquainted, ſhe conſented to admit his viſits when all the company were retired to reſt, and that night Temple bribed her maid to his purpoſe.

The watchful father, who had obſerved a growing eſteem, which he flattered himſelf would be productive of an eligible eſtabliſhment for his child, was lying awake, thinking of the happineſs that would await him could he ſee his darling daughter well married, when the ſhadow of a figure, paſſing into a ſtate cabin where his daughter ſlept, rouſed him. As her maid lay in a birth under her young lady, he ſuppoſed it might be ſhe who had ſat up; but not being eaſy in his mind, he aroſe ſoftly, and crept to the door, when hearing ſomething he did not like, he graſped his ſword, which lay on an empty birth, ruſhed into the ſtate cabin, and ſeeing a man leaping out of the bed his daughter occupied, he ſtabbed him in ſeveral places.

The noiſe drew together all the company, with the Captain and his men, to that part of the ſhip, where they found the fond father diſtracted, and Temple lying covered with wounds. The ſurgeon being interrogated, he pronounced him faſt approaching his end; and at eleven o'clock the following forenoon he expired, in all the agony of pain and deſpair.

Thus ended a life fruitful in evil deeds—a character without a ſingle trait of virtue. His heir at law was a man he hated, and always intended to leave every thing from, but he had an invincible averſion to making a will; his ſudden death now prevented a poſſibility of it, and this thought did not ſmooth the approach of diſſolution.

His ſervant returned in the firſt ſhip from New York, with proper evidence of the death of his late maſter, to Mr. Temple, couſin-german to the deceaſed, a man of

great worth and ſhining virtues, but ſtruggling with diſtreſs, as many, too many men of worth are. He felt the ſhocking circumſtances of the exit from this life of his relative, and freely forgave him for a degree of unkindneſs and neglect, which, for the honour of human nature, we could wiſh to ſay was unparalleled.

All that wealth, in the acquirement of which no flagitious act was ſpared by Mr. Temple, devolved to a man, towards whom he bore the greateſt enmity.—Such are thy wiſe decrees, Oh Providence!

Lady G———, from the moment ſhe learned Mr. Beaumont's idea that the young perſon who had been her companion, was ſhe who had voluntarily reſcued him from priſon, and acted with ſuch diſintereſted conduct, ſent off immediately to her father's, whither ſhe and her brother had retired, and, with the aſſiſtance of Mr. Beaumont, purchaſed

purchaſed them a handſome eſtate in the province they reſided in; and the fair, the amiable girl lived to pleaſe herſelf in an elegant retirement, doing good to all around her.

The Marquis of Loveſdale returned to England, ſome years after this period, perfectly recovered in health; he joined his friends at Ankerwick Caſtle, and rejoiced in the happineſs of Henry; he reſided principally between the Caſtle and Oakley Park.

Lord Melville became very dear to him, and the ſupreme happineſs of all thoſe he loved, reconciled him to that want he ever felt was not to be made up. He never married—the noble, the amiable Loveſdale could love but once; he grew old in the contemplation of charms that never faded in his ſight; he lived to ſee the children of his Beaumont and Lady Middleton arrive at years of maturity, following their noble

anceſtors

anceſtors in the paths of every virtue, with whom, and his beloved Matilda's offspring, he ſhared his fortune at his death, as well as his affections when living.

FINIS.

LANE, MINERVA-PRESS, LEADENHALL-STREET.

Just published,

AZALAIS AND AIMAR,

IN THREE VOLUMES,

Price 9s. sewed.

MELBOURNE,

THREE VOLUMES, 12MO. PRICE 10s. 6d. SEWED.

The hero of this tale, though apparently the ſon of a poor peaſant, diſcovers many ſhining qualities, recommends himſelf to ſplendid patronage, and ultimately finds parents high in the ſcale of rank and opulence. The characters are intereſting, if not original, and many of the ſentiments inculcate the ſoundeſt principles of moral utility, and are illuſtrated by an ingenuity and ſtrength of reaſoning worthy of the grace and dignity of virtue. The contraſt of diſpoſition, which is often exhibited in young perſons of the ſame age, is well painted by the author of this Novel, a part of which reminds us of Mr. Day's Sandford and Merton. There are alſo ſome excellent thoughts on education in general, and on the particular ſubject of public ſchools and colleges. Upon the whole, if an intereſting ſtory, a moral tendency, and much uſeful delineation of character and manners can recommend a Novel, Melbourne deſerves the applauſe of criticiſm.

Critical Review, September, 1799.

EDMUND OF THE FOREST,

FOUR VOLUMES, 12MO. PRICE 14S. SEWED.

There is in these volumes what will make them acceptable to various readers—a great deal of imagination. They excel also in the descriptive parts; and the Author has altogether made an agreeable use of that part of British History which relates to the sanguinary contests between the two Roses.

British Critic, August 1798.

EDGAR,

OR

THE PHANTOM OF THE CASTLE,

BY R. SICKLEMORE,

TWO VOLUMES, 12MO. PRICE 6S. SEWED.

This production is of the superior class, and it will afford some entertainment to the *amateurs* of horrors. It was written for a benevolent and useful purpose; and its moral is, that the efforts of an honest mind, though poor and unprotected, will ultimately rise superior to the deep-laid machinations of vice, though armed with wealth and power.

Critical Review, August 1798.

This book is given special protection for the reason indicated below:

Autograph	Giftbook
Association	Illustration
Condition	Miniature book
Cost	Original binding or covers
Edition	Presentation
Fine binding	Scarcity
Format	Subject

L82—5M—1-52—49125

BL